

The Book Of Revelation Study 56

Revelation 11:18-19 (NKJV)

¹⁸ *The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth."*

¹⁹ *Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.*

Again this evening as we begin to look at the Seventh Trumpet, and hear it sound we see the unfolding of activity in four stages:

One that we have already looked at and that was the Praise that rings forth to God for His Sovereignty in taking back the earth as His. He being the rightful owner.

And secondly we talked about the Paroxysms of Rage, as we see the people on the earth reacting to God's wrath, in the form of the judgments past and those to come. A clear hatred for God and for His own emerges and grows even to the point of war.

We want to now look at the next activities starting with;

A Plan for Judgment

Revelation 11:18b (NKJV)

¹⁸ *Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth."*

The coming of God's **wrath**, like the coming of Christ's kingdom (*V 15*), is so certain that it can be spoken of as if it had already happened.

The verb translated **came**, is another proleptic aorist verb. Describing a future event as an already accomplished fact.

Those who believe that a loving God will not pour out His wrath on them cling to a false and dangerous hope.

That God will one day judge unbelievers is a constant theme of Scripture.

Isaiah had much to say concerning that future day:

Isaiah 24:17-23 (NKJV)

¹⁷ *Fear and the pit and the snare Are upon you, O inhabitant of the earth.*

¹⁸ *And it shall be That he who flees from the noise of the fear Shall fall into the pit, And he who comes up from the midst of the pit Shall be caught in the snare; For the windows from on high are open, And the foundations of the earth are shaken.*

¹⁹ *The earth is violently broken, The earth is split open, The earth is shaken exceedingly.*

²⁰ *The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, And shall totter like a hut; Its transgression shall be heavy upon it, And it will fall, and not rise again.*

²¹ *It shall come to pass in that day That the Lord will punish on high the host of exalted ones, And on the*

earth the kings of the earth.

²² *They will be gathered together, As prisoners are gathered in the pit, And will be shut up in the prison; After many days they will be punished.*

²³ *Then the moon will be disgraced And the sun ashamed; For the Lord of hosts will reign On Mount Zion and in Jerusalem And before His elders, gloriously.*

Isaiah 26:20-21 (NKJV)

²⁰ *Come, my people, enter your chambers, And shut your doors behind you; Hide yourself, as it were, for a little moment, Until the indignation is past.*

²¹ *For behold, the Lord comes out of His place To punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; The earth will also disclose her blood, And will no more cover her slain.*

Isaiah 30:27-33 (NKJV)

²⁷ *Behold, the name of the Lord comes from afar, Burning with His anger, And His burden is heavy; His lips are full of indignation, And His tongue like a devouring fire.*

²⁸ *His breath is like an overflowing stream, Which reaches up to the neck, To sift the nations with the sieve of futility; And there shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people, Causing them to err.*

²⁹ *You shall have a song As in the night when a holy festival is kept, And gladness of heart as when one goes with a flute, To come into the mountain of the Lord, To the Mighty One of Israel.*

³⁰ *The Lord will cause His glorious voice to be heard, And show the descent of His arm, With the indignation of His anger And the flame of a devouring fire, With scattering, tempest, and hailstones.*

³¹ *For through the voice of the Lord Assyria will be beaten down, As He strikes with the rod.*

³² *And in every place where the staff of punishment passes, Which the Lord lays on him, It will be with tambourines and harps; And in battles of brandishing He will fight with it.*

³³ *For Tophet was established of old, Yes, for the king it is prepared. He has made it deep and large; Its pyre is fire with much wood; The breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, Kindles it.*

Ezekiel 38-39 depicts the gathering of unbelievers to fight against Christ and His people, Israel, at the battle of Armageddon

We want to note here that another invasion, at the end of the Millennium, is also said to involve Gog and Magog (*Rev 20:8-10.*)

The same names are used to indicate that this later invasion will be similar to the one during the Tribulation.

Ezekiel 38:16-23 (NKJV)

¹⁶ *You will come up against My people Israel like a cloud, to cover the land. It will be in the latter days that I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me, when I am hallowed in you, O Gog, before their eyes."*

¹⁷ *Thus says the Lord God: "Are you he of whom I have spoken in former days by My servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied for years in those days that I would bring you against them?"*

¹⁸ *"And it will come to pass at the same time, when Gog comes against the land of Israel," says the Lord God, "that My fury will show in My face.*

¹⁹ *For in My jealousy and in the fire of My wrath I have spoken: 'Surely in that day there shall be a great earthquake in the land of Israel,*

²⁰ *so that the fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the beasts of the field, all creeping things that creep on the earth, and all men who are on the face of the earth shall shake at My presence. The mountains shall be thrown down, the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.'*

²¹ *I will call for a sword against Gog throughout all My mountains," says the Lord God. "Every man's sword will be against his brother.*

²² *And I will bring him to judgment with pestilence and bloodshed; I will rain down on him, on his troops,*

and on the many peoples who are with him, flooding rain, great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.

²³ Thus I will magnify Myself and sanctify Myself, and I will be known in the eyes of many nations. Then they shall know that I am the Lord." ' "

The sounding of the seventh trumpet marks the fulfillment of the great judgment event that the prophets foresaw and saints of all ages have longed for. (*Ps 3:7; 7:6; 35:1-8; 44:26; 68:1-2*)

It will be a time when God pours out His wrath on His enemies.

Not only will the seventh trumpet signal the outpouring of God's wrath on earth, it will also indicate that **the time** has come **for the dead to be judged.**

Time translates *kairo*, which refers to a season, era, occasion, or event.

The establishing of Christ's kingdom will be a fitting time for the dead to be judged.

The great white throne judgment (*20:11-15*) is not in view in this passage, as some argue, since that judgment explicitly involves only unbelievers.

It is best to see the reference to judgment here as a general reference to all future judgments.

The elders in their song make no attempt to separate the different phases of judgment as they are separated in the closing chapters of Revelation.

They simply sing of future judgments as though they were one event, in the same way that other Scriptures do not distinguish future judgments from each other (*John 5:25,28-29; Acts 17:31; 24:21*).

The judgment will first of all be **the time** for God **to reward** His **bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear His name, the small and the great.**

Though the power to serve God in a way worthy of reward is a gift of God's grace, still all through the New Testament believers are encouraged to work in view of those promised rewards.

Jesus declared:

Revelation 22:12 (NKJV)

¹² "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to everyone according to his work.

To the Corinthians Paul wrote:

1 Corinthians 3:8 (NKJV)

⁸ Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor.

The reward promised to believers is that they will inherit the kingdom in both its millennial and eternal phases.

Matthew 25:34-40 (NKJV)

³⁴ Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

³⁵ for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in;

³⁶ I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'

³⁷ Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty

and give You drink?

³⁸ *When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You?*

³⁹ *Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'*

⁴⁰ *And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'*

Revelation 21:7 (NKJV)

⁷ *He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.*

Believers are also promised crowns, including the crown of righteousness:

2 Timothy 4:8 (NKJV)

⁸ *Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.*

Also promised is the crown of life:

James 1:12 (NKJV)

¹² *Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.*

Revelation 2:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ *Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.*

And then there is the crown of glory:

1 Peter 5:4 (NKJV)

⁴ *and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.*

The phrase **Your bond-servants the prophets** encompasses all who have proclaimed God's truth throughout redemptive history, from Moses to the two witnesses in Revelation.

Scripture frequently designates prophets as the Lord's **servants**, (*2 Kings 9:7; Ezra 9:1`1; Jer 7:25; Ezek 38:17; Dan 9:6; Amos 3:7; Zech 1:6*)

The time has come for them to receive a prophets reward:

Matthew 10:41 (NKJV)

⁴¹ *He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.*

All those faithful men who stood for God in dark days and against opposition will then find their work revealed and rewarded.

Another group to be rewarded is **the saints**, further defined as **those who fear Your name**. **Saints** is a common biblical description for the redeemed in both the Old and New Testaments. All of God's saints, from **the small to the great** will receive rewards.

The judgment will also **destroy those who destroy the earth**.

This is not a reference to those who pollute the environment, but to those who pollute the earth with their sin.

That includes all unbelievers, especially in the context of Revelation the false economic and religious system called Babylon

Revelation 19:2 (NKJV)

² For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her."

Anti-Christ and his followers, and Satan himself, the ultimate destroyer.

The Apostle Paul wrote:

2 Thessalonians 2:7 (NKJV)

⁷ For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way.

So lawlessness is at work even now, but will reach its pinnacle of destructive activity, shredding the very fabric of society in every evil way.

Given stewardship and dominion over the earth man instead fell into sin and throughout his history has continually corrupted the earth;

Romans 8:19-21 (NKJV)

¹⁹ For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.

²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope;

²¹ because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

When that corrupting reaches its apex, God will destroy the earth and create a new one.

Revelation 21:1 (NKJV)

¹ Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.

Isaiah 65:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind.

Isaiah 66:22 (NKJV)

²² "For as the new heavens and the new earth Which I will make shall remain before Me," says the Lord, "So shall your descendants and your name remain.

2 Peter 3:12-13 (NKJV)

¹² looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?

¹³ Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

PROMISE OF COMMUNION

Revelation 11:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.

Bound up in the seventh trumpet is the promise to believers of unbroken fellowship with God forever. That fellowship is symbolized by the images of verse 19

The opening of **the temple of God which is in heaven**

The place where His presence dwells, and this reveals **the ark of the covenant.**

The ark symbolizes that the covenant God has promised to men is now available in its fullness.

In the midst of the fury of His judgment on unbelievers, God, as it were, throws open the Holy of Holies (where the ark was located: *Ex 26:33-34; 2 Chron 5:7*) and draws believers into His presence.

That would have been unthinkable in the Old Testament temple, when only the high priest entered the Holy of Holies once a year;

Hebrews 9:7 (NKJV)

⁷ But into the second part the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people's sins committed in ignorance;

The ark symbolizes God's communion with the redeemed because it was there that blood sacrifices were offered to atone for men's sin. Also it was from above the ark that God spoke to Moses (Num 7:89)

The ark was called the ark of testimony

Exodus 25:22 (NKJV)

²² And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.

It is called the ark of God, and the ark of God strength;

Psalms 132:8 (NKJV)

⁸ Arise, O Lord, to Your resting place, You and the ark of Your strength.

Inside it was a golden jar holding the manna, and Aaron's rod which budded, and the tables of the covenant:

Hebrews 9:4 (NKJV)

⁴ which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant;

All of this symbolized that God would supply His people, was sovereign over His people, gave His law to His people, and entered into an eternal saving covenant with His people.

But along with the ark in the heavenly temple **there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm.**

Similar events are associated with God's majestic glorious heavenly throne:

Revelation 4:5 (NKJV)

⁵ And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

Revelation 8:5 (NKJV)

⁵ Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake.

Revelation 16:17-18 (NKJV)

¹⁷ Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, "It is done!"

¹⁸ And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth.

They are associated with judgment.

Heaven is the source of vengeance on unbelievers, as well as covenant blessings for the redeemed.

The message of the seventh trumpet is that Jesus Christ is the sovereign King of kings and Lord of lords. He will one day take the rule of the earth away from the usurper, Satan, and from earth's petty human rulers.

History is moving inexorably toward its culmination in Christ's earthly reign. When He returns, He will bring covenant blessings to the redeemed, but eternal judgment to those who reject Him.

In the light of that sobering truth Peter exclaims.

2 Peter 3:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,