

# 9. The Last Trumpet

**T**he seventh trumpet is where the resurrection of God's people occurs—along with the second, and final, rapture of the Church. A description of this rapture can be found by grouping events between the start of the seventh trumpet and the first bowl of God's wrath—into one event. This event is the *seventh* and *last* trumpet.

Start with the announcement of the last trumpet. *The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever."* (Revelation 11:15) The statement, *the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord*—is from persons instantaneously raptured from earth into heaven. They are describing their experience by saying something like, "What I saw one moment was (*the kingdom of*) *the world*—then immediately the view changed, became a view of heaven, which is *the kingdom of our Lord*."



The rapture story does not immediately continue in Revelation. John slows the story to insert detail about primary end-time characters.

#### **BREAK TO DESCRIBE PERSONALITIES**

<b>Inserted Material</b>	<b>End-Time Characters</b>
Revelation 12	A Woman, a Dragon, and the Woman's Offspring
Revelation 13	Beast out of the Sea (Revelation 13:2-8) Beast out of the Earth (Revelation 13:11-18)
Revelation 14:1-5	The Lamb and the 144,000 of Israel

The story of the greatest harvest of God's people continues ...

Two harvests occur at the last trumpet. The first harvest takes even the very last Gentile ever to accept God's salvation: *I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one 'like a son of man' with a crown of gold on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. Then another angel came out of the temple and called in a loud voice to him who was sitting on the cloud, 'Take your sickle and reap, because the time to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.' So he who was seated on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth and the earth was harvested. (Revelation 14:14-16)*

Paul also taught that there would be a resurrection of the dead, followed by a rapture of believers—*at the last trumpet*. Believers who are alive will be changed—given bodies that will survive all eternity. *Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in a flash, in the*

*twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. (1 Corinthians 15:51-53)*

Paul further wrote about this last trumpet rapture being for those left-behind from the initial rapture. In the following verses “*and are left*” refers to those believers who were left-behind on earth for the first 42 months. *For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)*

## **Israel Harvested**

Gentile believers are now in heaven, through either rapture or physical death. The time for Gentiles ends at this halfway marker in the final seven years. Gentiles remaining on earth can no longer accept salvation. Unbelieving Gentiles will have taken the mark of the beast. During the seven thunders, they will have heard the very nature of God, yet still reject God. They respond, “Not now, not ever!” To be fully convicted by the Holy Spirit of your need to accept the Messiah and to reply “not now, not ever” is to consider yourself to be greater than the Holy Spirit. Jesus said such blasphemy would never be forgiven (Matthew 12:31-32).

In contrast, Israel will respond positively to the seven thunders. Paul foretold that the entire nation of Israel would turn to Christ following the conversion of the last Gentile believer; *Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved.* (Romans 11:25-26).

Israel is the vineyard of the last trumpet. *Another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. Still another angel, who had charge of the fire, came from the altar and called in a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, "Take your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of grapes from the earth's vine because its grapes are ripe." The angel swung his sickle on the earth, gathered its grapes and threw them into the great winepress of God's wrath. They were trampled in the winepress outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press, rising as high as the horses' bridles for a distance of 1,600 stadia.* (Revelation 14:17-20) Isaiah identified this vine thousands of years ago: *The vineyard of the Lord Almighty is the house of Israel.* (Isaiah 5:7)

Instead of being immediately taken up into heaven this nation, which rejected Jesus for two thousand years, is harvested in God's wrath. The violent nature of the Israeli harvest is because Satan will initiate intense persecution. In response, Israelis will demonstrate an uncompromised allegiance to God.