

End-Time Events: Part II

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In this article, we will briefly consider “The SEVENTH Seal.” Thereafter, we will examine the issue of *where* the marriage of the Lamb will take place... and also examine the *time-order* of events.

The SEVENTH Seal

The Seventh Seal is essentially synonymous with the 1-year “Day of the LORD.” It is a period of **GOD’S wrath** upon the earth.

The **Seventh Seal** itself **consists of** *seven* major prophetic events. And *each one* of those seven prophetic events is **introduced by an angel blowing a trumpet**:

When He [Christ] opened **the seventh seal**, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. And I saw the **seven angels** who stand before God, and to them were given **seven trumpets**... So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. The first angel sounded... Then the second angel sounded... Then the third angel sounded... Then the fourth angel sounded... Then the fifth angel sounded... Then the sixth angel sounded... Then the seventh angel sounded (Rev. 8:1-2, 6-8,10,12; 9:1,13; 11:15)

Yes, this “Seventh **Seal**” is divided into (composed of) “Seven **Trumpets**.” As shown above, the *first six* of those 7 trumpets are blown in Rev. chapters 8 and 9... with the 7th trumpet blown in Rev.11:15. [By the way, the *first* place in the book of Revelation where the word “plague” is used, is Rev. 9:18, describing events that occur when the **Sixth** Angel sounds his trumpet.]

The events *accompanying* these “Seven Trumpets” lasts about one year... actually, *slightly longer* than one year... and these events *culminate* with Christ and His armies returning *from* heaven to *defeat* the vast array of human armies and to then set up God’s Kingdom on this earth!

Now, not only is the “Seventh SEAL” composed of “Seven Trumpets,” but the **seventh** OF those “Seven Trumpets” is *itself* composed of “Seven Bowl Judgments” (also referred to in Rev.15:1 as “the seven last plagues”). **And, just as the “Seven Trumpets” were each blown by one of seven angels, these “Seven Bowl Judgments” (“the seven last plagues”) are each poured out by one of seven angels!**

Furthermore, in referring *to* these Seven Bowl Judgments (“the seven last plagues”), scripture says that “**in them the wrath OF God is complete**” (Rev.15:1). They are, in fact, *collectively* referred to as “the Third Woe” (Rev. 8:13; 11:14).

Marriage IN Heaven!

Where will the marriage between Christ and His saints occur? Will it take place in heaven, or on earth, or just *above* the earth (in earth’s atmosphere)?

We will now examine irrefutable **proof** that the marriage (and the wedding supper) will, in fact, take place **in heaven!**

Consider this: Both the Father and the Son have existed **forever**. The Father and the Son are “**ONE**”! There is NOTHING more important to the Father than the Son! Yet, the Father GAVE His only begotten Son FOR mankind... which shows how **important OUR** potentiality is to the Father!!

Accordingly, it is totally **unimaginable** that the Father would not be **present** at the wedding between His Son and the First Fruits. It is totally unimaginable that the Father would not **officiate** at that wedding! Nor is it imaginable that this GLORIOUS event will take place anywhere **other than in heaven!!**

Take note. **IF** this marriage were to take place **on earth**, then God the Father would **NOT be there!!** Why? Because “God the Father” doesn’t come to the earth until **after** the Millennium and the White Throne Judgment periods have **ended!**

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**. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down **out of heaven FROM God** [that is, **FROM** God the Father], prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, **the tabernacle of God is WITH men**, and He [the Father] **will dwell WITH them**, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be **with them and be their God**” (Rev.21: 1-3).

So... that shows that the Father will make His **FIRST** appearance on earth, **when? AFTER** the Millennium and the White Throne Judgment periods have **ended!** It is after those two periods have *ended*, that the earth will be **purified with fire** (II Peter 3:10)... and there will be a **NEW** earth.

IF it were true that the glorified saints will be **prevented** from going to **heaven AT** Christ’s return, then that would mean that the Father could **not attend... nor officiate at**, the **GLORIOUS**

wedding of His Son! It would **also** mean that the glorified saints would have to wait **1,100 years AFTER** their glorification and marriage to Christ, **before** even **SEEING** the Father face to face!

Such circumstances are **unthinkable!**

Also consider **this**: When the saints are glorified **at** Christ's return, we will then be **LIKE** Christ (I John 3:2). We, like Christ, will live in another **dimension**... a dimension **NOT limited** by time or space. (Of course, "for the sake of our calling to serve human beings for a thousand years, we will operate *in* time and space as kings and priests on the earth."¹)

Even **during** the Millennium (*while* serving human beings), we will be **capable** of **instantaneous** travel. Certainly, we will have access— **immediate** access— to the Father's throne in heaven!

In fact, the book of Job reveals that, even **now**, in our *present* day, **Satan the devil** has **access** to God's throne. How much **MORE SO** will that be the case, for God's glorified sons!

Furthermore, the subheading immediately below plainly shows that *following* their **marriage** to Christ, the saints (along with an angelic host) will follow Christ **FROM HEAVEN** back to earth, to make war with the earth's armies. That, of course, **proves** that the marriage will be in heaven!

So, yes... the resurrected saints will marry Christ **IN** heaven. Afterwards, they will **return** to earth (*with* Christ)... and will reign **ON EARTH** for a thousand years! (Rev. 5:10; 20:4-6). (For even **additional** evidence that the marriage will be *in heaven*, read the topic below entitled "Mount Zion.")

The "armies in heaven"?

Notice the following prophetic scene which the Apostle John saw take place **IN HEAVEN**: "Now I saw **heaven opened**, and behold, a white horse. And He [Christ] who sat on him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He *was* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And **the armies in heaven**, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, **followed Him** on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should **strike the nations [of the earth]...**" (Rev. 19: 11-15).

Who are these "armies in heaven"? Whoever they are, the above passage tells us that they will follow Christ **to this earth** to strike the nations.

Notice that we just read that these “armies in heaven, [are] **clothed in fine linen, white and clean.**” And compare *that* description to verses 7-8 of the **same** chapter: “...the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.’ And to her it was granted to be arrayed in **fine linen, clean and bright**, for the fine linen is the righteous acts **of the saints**” (Rev. 19: 7-8).

So, it certainly sounds like the **glorified saints** will be a part of those “armies in heaven” who will follow Christ back to earth to “strike the nations.” And, for **further** evidence of that, consider Rev. 15:1-2:

Then I saw another sign **in heaven**, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete. And I saw *something* like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and **those [the glorified saints] who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass**, having harps of God.

That scripture in Rev. 15:2, along with Rev. 4:6, are the *only* scriptures in the Bible which speak of a “sea of glass.” And if you read the *context* of both of those scriptures, it is very plain that the “sea of glass” (*on which the glorified saints will stand*) is **in heaven!**

Plainly, it is the glorified **saints**... along *with* an angelic host... who will *compose* those armies in heaven. And these armies will *follow* Christ **to** this earth to make war with the armies of this world!

Yes, **after** the saints rise in the First Resurrection, those glorified saints will *marry* Christ **in heaven**, and they will then follow Him back **to earth** to make war with the rebellious armies of this earth!

“These [the earth’s armies] will make **war** with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and **those who are WITH Him are called, chosen, and faithful**” (Rev. 17:14). Once again, that *description* of those who accompany Christ (as being “called, chosen, and faithful”) **describes the saints!**

Furthermore, notice Jude, verses 14-15: “...Behold, **the Lord comes WITH ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment** on all...”

Mount Zion

Consider the following passage from Revelation chapter 14:

Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb [Christ] standing **on Mount Zion**, and **WITH** Him one hundred *and* forty-four thousand, having His Father’s name written on

their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. They sang as it were a new song **before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders**; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth (Rev. 14:1-3).

Now, is the passage above referring to events taking place on Mount Zion **at Jerusalem? No!** It is describing events **at the HEAVENLY Mount Zion**. The passage says that this scene takes place “**before the throne**” and “**before the elders.**” Please consider that *nowhere in the Bible* do we find “the twenty-four elders” *anywhere other than* before God’s throne **in HEAVEN!** (Also consider that there is a Temple/Tabernacle **IN HEAVEN**, which the *earthly* ones were **patterned after**... as shown in Heb. 8:1-5; 9: 21-25).

Furthermore, notice the *next* chapter, chapter 15, where we see *additional* information about these 144,000 who were referred to in the passage we just read:

Then I saw another sign **in heaven**, great and marvelous: seven angels having the **seven last plagues**, for in them the wrath of God is complete. And I saw *something* like **a sea of glass** mingled with fire, and those who have the **victory over the beast**, over his image and over his mark *and* over the number of his name, **standing on the sea of glass**, having harps of God” (Rev. 15: 1-2; cf. Rev. chap. 4).

So... this shows that it is **at the time of the seven last plagues (the seven Bowl Judgments)** that those who marry Christ will be standing **on** this “sea of glass.” And, as verse one said, **all this is IN heaven!**

Plainly, all these things are **heavenly** images... images of things **IN heaven!** They are **NOT** images of events occurring on earth, **nor** of events occurring in the earth’s atmosphere!

Let’s now resume by quoting from an article written by **Richard F. Ames** entitled “The Saints Will Stand Before God’s Throne In Heaven”—an article printed in the Sept/Oct. 2012 issue of the *Living Church News*:

Dr. Roderick C. Meredith has been very busy with other important projects, so he asked me to write this issue’s Editorial. In it, I will share with you some of what we have recently discussed in our Council of Elders meetings...

Some of you have heard me preaching on some parts of what follows, but have not heard it all “put together” as I will try to do here. You may also have heard Dr. Meredith discussing this, as he did briefly at the Feast of Tabernacles in Panama City Beach, Florida, last year. In fact, much of what Dr. Meredith and I have preached, and what I discuss in this article, **follows closely from what Mr. John**

Ogwyn wrote in 2003 in his powerful booklet, *Revelation: The Mystery Unveiled!*

... we should consider the example of Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong. Many of you may remember his booklet, *Pagan Holidays or God's Holy Days—Which?* Note the humility with which **Mr. Armstrong** presented the following discussion of Christ's return:

“And perhaps the glorious second coming shall occur, in whatever year it may be, on this very day of the Feast of Trumpets—who knows? While we cannot say for certain, yet cannot we see this possibility?... (p. 40, 1974 edition; p. 34, 1976 edition).

Today, some scattered members of God's Church insist vehemently that Christ will come for His saints on Pentecost—something that the Living Church of God does not see in Scripture and, as a result, will not teach. Others proclaim, far more ardently *than* Mr. Armstrong, that Christ will and must set His feet on the Mount of Olives *precisely* on the Feast of Trumpets. Many who **assume** they are “holding fast to the letter” of what Mr. Armstrong taught **are, in fact, relying on the unspoken assumption** that God has given them clear answers He did **not** reveal to Mr. Armstrong...

So, that was an excerpt from a 2012 article by Richard F. Ames.

THREE momentous events occur when the SEVENTH Angel blows his trumpet (which *is* the sounding of the “SEVENTH Trumpet,” referred to as “the LAST Trumpet”):

- (1) Jesus Christ returns (*on* this annual Feast of Trumpets) to meet the saints in the air.
- (2) The *takeover* of the nations *by* the Kingdom of God is announced! “Then the **seventh** angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms of this world **have become** the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!’” (Rev.11:15).
- (3) The “Third Woe” (“the 7 Bowl Judgments” or “7 Last Plagues”) begin to be poured out. [These “Bowl Judgments” will almost certainly last for a period of either 7 or 9 days (“9 days” being the period *between* the beginning of Trumpets and the beginning of Atonement)].

When the *Seventh* Angel sounds his trumpet (the **LAST trumpet**), Jesus Christ returns to this earth, and the glorified saints will *meet Him in the air*:

in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the last trumpet**. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be **raised** incorruptible, and we shall be changed” (I Cor.15:52).

For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and **with the trumpet of God**. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to **meet the Lord in the air**. And thus we shall always be with the Lord (I Thess.4: 16-17).

When the saints rise to meet Christ in the air, they will then follow Him back **TO heaven, where they will be for *only* a period of 9 days or less** [“7 days” seems a distinct possibility]. **DURING that period (when the 7 Last Plagues are being poured out), the marriage ceremony and the wedding supper will take place in heaven.**

Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the **seven last plagues**, for in them the wrath of God is complete. And I saw *something* like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and **those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark *and* over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass [in heaven], having harps of God (Rev.15:1-2).**

Now, let’s continue quoting from the article by Mr. Richard F. Ames referenced above:

After this momentous event [the resurrection of the saints], the *seven last plagues* described in Revelation 16 will be poured out for the next nine days—*culminating* in the putting away of Satan on [the 10th day] the Day of Atonement. Earth’s armies will gather at Megiddo, preparing their futile attempt to fight against Christ (vv. 14-16). As Mr. [John] Ogwyn writes [on p. 42 of his booklet] *Revelation: The Mystery Unveiled!*, “**Most likely**, the action that is described in the book of Revelation as occurring **between** the blowing of the seventh trumpet in Revelation 11:15 and the putting away of Satan in Revelation 20:2 **will take place in a nine day span between Trumpets and Atonement.**”¹

... As Mr. Ogwyn noted [hinted] in his booklet, the Revelation 19-20 sequence indicates that, either on **or just prior** to the Day of Atonement, Jesus Christ will come **with His army**—the saints *and* the angelic host—to *conquer* those who seek to fight against Him.”¹

As stated above, Mr. Ames indicates that “either on **or** just prior to the Day of Atonement, Jesus Christ will return **with His saints**—His army—to conquer those who seek to fight against Him.” Consider this. There are 9 days *between* the Feast of Trumpets and the Day of Atonement... and the *following* would seem to be a very *plausible* scenario: The saints might very well be in heaven (for the wedding/wedding-supper) for *only* SEVEN days, and then the next 2 days (days 8 and 9) would be when Christ (along with His army of glorified saints and angels) will **destroy** the earthly armies. Then, on the *following* day, the 10th day (The Day of Atonement), is when Satan will be chained (and he will *remain* chained for 1,000 years).

Destruction of the Earth's Armies

Christ, accompanied by the glorified saints and a host of angels, will **destroy** the earth's armies. **Most (or all) of that destruction** may very well not occur until near the end of the 9th day (the day *before* the Day of Atonement). Here's why. With the sounding of the **Sixth Angel's trumpet**, there is a **massing** on the **east bank** of the Euphrates River of the 200 million-man army (Rev.9:13-19). Then, this army will **cross** the Euphrates when the "Sixth Bowl Judgment" **dries up** that river (Rev.16:12-16; also see pages 31 and 38 of Mr. John Ogwyn's 2003 booklet *Revelation: The Mystery Unveiled!*).

Now, it's *possible* that the "Sixth Bowl Judgment" will begin *earlier* than the 6th day, but let's assume that it is the 6th day when the Euphrates River is miraculously dried up (*similar* to when the Red Sea parted and enabled the Israelites and the Egyptian Army to pass through on **dry** land). It would thereafter *take a while* for the massive human army to travel *from* that point to Megiddo.

Depending on where they cross the Euphrates, it could be as little as 425 miles from the Euphrates to Megiddo (and then another 55 miles to Jerusalem... although very *few* of that huge army will travel the *entire* distance of that *final* 55 miles before being destroyed).

If most of the destruction of the armies occurs near the END of day-9 (which seems likely), then *what* will Christ and His army be doing during days 8 and 9? Perhaps they will simply *appear periodically* (in the sky or on the ground) *during* days 8 and 9... *until* the latter part of day 9, when most of the *destruction* occurs.

A Brief Review

At this point, let's do a brief recap of events.

Mr. Armstrong believed (and The Living Church of God teaches) that Christ will return **on** the Day of Trumpets. There are 9 days from the beginning of the (yearly) Feast of Trumpets to the beginning of The Day of Atonement. So, 9 days *after* the day that Christ returns (that is, on the 10th day... the Day of Atonement) Satan will be chained for 1,000 years.

Yet, what happens **during** that 9-day period?

During that 9-day period, the First Resurrection occurs **and** the Seven Bowl Judgments will be poured out.

Now, **what do those *resurrected* saints DO during those 9 days** (while the Bowl Judgments are being poured out)? They have to be doing something! By putting the scriptures together, it seems fairly clear.

The “marriage of the Lamb (and the wedding supper)” **and** the subsequent “return to earth and destruction of earth’s rebellious armies” would all certainly fit *within* that 9-day period!

Time Sequence

Mr. John Ogwyn had this to say: “The Book of Revelation Is **Primarily in Time Sequence**... While there are a few ‘insets’ [such as chapters 12, 13, 17, 18] that go back and let a reader ‘catch up’ on certain events, Revelation’s narrative flows chronologically.”²

Since the book of Revelation is primarily in time sequence, let’s ask the question, why is it that the marriage of the Lamb is first described **after** the pouring out of all the seven Bowl Judgments?

The book of Revelation’s *first* reference to the marriage of the Lamb is in chapter 19, whereas all of the Bowl Judgments are poured out in chapter 16.

Let’s understand that Revelation chapters 17 and 18 are “inset” chapters... which could also be termed “parenthetical” chapters. These 2 chapters describe the False Church. These 2 chapters do **NOT**, in any way, represent *elapsed time* between the end of chapter 16 and the beginning of chapter 19. So, chronologically speaking, chapters 15, 16, and 19 are all speaking about events occurring in relatively rapid-fire succession... during that nine-day period!

Notice, again, from John Ogwyn’s booklet:

The *seventh* trumpet, described in Revelation 11:15, is central... in its importance. It is the “last trump”— the time of the saints’ resurrection to immortality. This verse [Rev. 11:15] is vital for understanding the rest of Revelation, because it marks the point at which the saints come out of their graves to enter into glory. The events from this point through the beginning of Revelation 20 all occur WITHIN A VERY SHORT TIME. Except for inset accounts, the entire period covered by these chapters is *after* the first resurrection and *before* the onset of the Millennium.²

However, the question still remains, why is the *marriage* of the Lamb *first* described **after** the pouring out of all the seven Bowl Judgments?

Well, although the **marriage** is not described until Revelation chapter 19, the sounding of the *seventh* angel's trumpet is referred to much *earlier*, in Rev. 11:15. The sounding of that seventh trumpet—the **LAST** Trumpet—is when Christ returns and the saints are resurrected. “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the last trumpet**. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be **raised** incorruptible, and we shall be changed” (I Cor. 15:52).

So, the saints are *resurrected* at the time of Rev. 11:15, but the *marriage* is not described until after the Bowl Judgments are poured out. Why is that?

Consider that the Bible does *not reveal* how long it will be *between* the resurrection of the saints and their marriage to Christ. It is very conceivable that the wedding *may not* occur on the *first* of the 9 days! Maybe it will occur on the 2nd or 3rd day (for example), *after* the glorified saints are first introduced to Jesus Christ, to God the Father, and to each other... including their meeting of such heroes of the Bible as Abraham, Moses, David, Elijah, Daniel, Paul, John the Baptist, the 12 disciples, etc.

Now, consider *both* of the following things (**all components of which** occur **WITHIN** the 9-day period):

(1) The Seven Bowl Judgments

(2) The wedding, the wedding-supper, **and** the return to earth to destroy the rebellious armies

When the Bible *describes* those two things above, it makes much more sense to describe all the 7 Bowl Judgments together at one time (as the Bible does), *than* for the description to keep switching back and forth between the various elements which compose “(2)” above. And, that is even *more so the case*, since scripture doesn't reveal *precisely on which* of the nine days that the three elements of “(2)” occur!

(It should be obvious, however, that the destruction of earth's armies occurs *near the end* of the 9-day period, as discussed on page 8.)

Conclusion

In conclusion, scripture does not reveal *every detail* about end-time events. Yet, we know that in the years just ahead, mankind will experience a 3½ year period of *devastating* destruction... followed by the setting up God's *glorious* Kingdom here on earth!

References

1. Richard F. Ames, "The Saints Will Stand Before God's Throne In Heaven," *Living Church News*, Sept/Oct, 2012, Living Church of God
2. John H. Ogwyn, *Revelation: The Mystery Unveiled!*, Oct. 2003 booklet, Living Church of God