

United Church of God, *an International Association*



The Resurrection at the Seventh Trumpet

Within God's Plan of Salvation

Doctrine Paper

Approved by the Council of Elders – May 5, 2026

All scriptures are quoted from *The Holy Bible*, New King James Version, unless otherwise noted.

The resurrection in God's plan

One of the most profound truths revealed in Scripture is that God is working out a carefully ordered *plan of salvation* for all humanity. This plan is not random or vague—it is deliberately structured and revealed through God's annual Feasts and Holy Days. Leviticus chapter 23 outlines the seven major stages by which God is bringing many sons to glory (Hebrews 2:10):

1. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Passover);
2. The putting away of sin and partaking of the Bread of Life (Days of Unleavened Bread);
3. The calling of the firstfruits and the receiving of God's Holy Spirit (Pentecost);
4. The events surrounding the seventh trumpet, including the return of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of the saints, and the kingdoms of this world have become the Kingdom of God (Trumpets);
5. Satan is put away (Atonement);
6. The Kingdom of God reigns on earth for 1,000 years (Feast of Tabernacles);
7. The second resurrection and final judgment (Eighth Day).

Within this framework, the seventh trumpet and *the resurrection of the saints* are a central and *pivotal* moment that trigger a rapid sequence of events, bringing Satan's rule of the world to an end and establishing Jesus Christ and His saints in the Kingdom (Revelation 11:15; Daniel 2:44; 7:22, 27). This is part of the symbolism of the Feast of Trumpets.

The Bible reveals that *the resurrection of the saints* takes place at a very specific time—the *sounding of the seventh trumpet*. Understanding this timing is essential, because it connects the resurrection with the meaning of the *Feast of Trumpets*, a key step in God's redemptive plan, and clarifies the sequence of end-time events.

The clear statement: the last trumpet

The apostle Paul gives a direct and unmistakable statement about the timing of the resurrection of God's saints: "*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*" (1 Corinthians 15:52).

This verse establishes two key facts: The resurrection occurs *at a trumpet blast*, and it specifically happens at the *last trumpet*.

This raises an important question: *What is the "last trumpet"?*

The seven trumpets of Revelation

Although trumpets were sounded before each Holy Day in ancient Israel by the Levites, the book of Revelation describes a sequence of *seven trumpets* sounded by angels after the seventh seal was

opened (Revelation 8:1-2), during the “*Day of the Lord*”—a period implied to last one year.¹

In Revelation 11:15 we read: “*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!’*” This is the *seventh trumpet*—the final one in the series.

Since Paul speaks that the resurrection occurs at the *last trumpet*, and Revelation identifies a sequence culminating in the seventh, it follows logically that the “*last trumpet*” is the *seventh trumpet*.

Christ descends and the saints meet Him in the air

Paul reinforces this timing in another passage: “*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*” (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). Here we see additional details:

- Christ *descends from heaven*;
- The *trumpet of God sounds*;
- The *dead in Christ are resurrected* as spirit beings;
- Those saints who are alive are changed to spirit beings and caught up with them in the clouds, meeting the Lord in the air;
- This gathering of the resurrected and transformed saints takes place “in the clouds,” i.e., earth’s atmosphere.

This resurrection corresponds perfectly with the seventh trumpet of Revelation and the last trumpet described in 1 Corinthians 15:52 (in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet), and announces that the kingdoms of this world have become the Kingdom of God and that Christ will reign forever (Revelation 11:15).

The seventh trumpet: more than a sound

The seventh trumpet is not just a signal—it marks a *pivotal* turning point in human history. It triggers:

- The *resurrection and glorification of the saints*;
- The events surrounding the *return of Jesus Christ*;
- The *establishment of God’s Kingdom* to rule on earth.

¹ “The length of God’s judgment is nowhere specified in Revelation, unless it is implied in the expression “the great *day* of His wrath” ([Revelation 6:17](#)). In some other prophetic passages God specifies that a “day” represents a *year* of punishment ([Numbers 14:34](#); [Ezekiel 4:4-6](#)). If that same principle applies here in Revelation, the Day of the Lord (“the day of His wrath”) would be the *final year* before Christ returns. Indeed, [Isaiah 34:8](#) refers to the day of the Lord’s anger as a year-long period. “This corresponds to the *last year* of the 3 ½ years of Satan’s wrath. In other words, God’s punishments on the Day of the Lord would overlap Satan’s vengeance on God’s people for a period of one year—the final year of the last 3 ½ years” (UCG’s “*The Book of Revelation Unveiled*”, “*The day of God’s wrath will be brief*”, page 36).

This is why the sounding of the seven angelic trumpet blasts, and particularly the seventh trumpet, are symbolized by the *Feast of Trumpets*, one of God's annual Holy Days. Trumpets—specifically the shofar and silver trumpets—frequently symbolize a warning of war, a call to arms, an alarm of danger, or a signal for divine intervention in battle. They represent a “cry of alarm” to alert the people of impending conflict (Numbers 10:9; 2 Chronicles 13:12-14; Joel 2:1; Jeremiah 4:19-21; Nehemiah 4:20).

The saints receive their reward

Further confirmation comes from Revelation 11:18: “...*the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints... and should destroy those who destroy the earth.*”

At the seventh trumpet a sequential set of three major events is initiated, as per Revelation 11:15, 18:

1. **The time of the dead to be judged.** The saints are found worthy to stand in the first resurrection (Luke 21:36), while the rest of the dead do not live again until the thousand years are finished (Revelation 20:4-5);
2. **God's servants, the prophets and the saints, *are rewarded*** according to their works before God's angels (Matthew 16:27);
3. **Those that destroy the earth are to be destroyed** (Revelation 19:19-21).

This aligns directly with the resurrection and subsequent events during which the called, chosen and faithful—hereafter referred to simply as *the saints*—are with the “Lord of lords and King of kings” when He overcomes the beast and those kings who have given their power to it (Revelation 17:14).

Why the resurrection is not on the Day of Pentecost

A misunderstanding by some is the notion that the resurrection of the saints occurs on the Day of Pentecost. While it is true that Pentecost is deeply connected to God's plan of salvation, Scripture clearly shows that it does *not* represent the time of the resurrection.

The biblical evidence shows that Pentecost represents a *different stage* within the framework of God's Holy Days. Pentecost is closely aligned with the ***first coming of Jesus Christ***, and not with His second coming. Conversely, as already shown, the resurrection of the saints is aligned with the blowing of the seventh trumpet and the events surrounding Christ's ***second coming***.

Pentecost is to be counted from the day the sheaf of the firstfruits of barley was *waved*. Therefore, Pentecost's symbolism of the *waving* of two loaves (which is covered in more detail in the next section) is connected to the *waving* of the firstfruit sheaf by a count of 50 days, both being waved “*before the Lord*” (Leviticus 23:11, 20). Pentecost is thus directly linked with events related to Christ's ***first coming***.

Some assume the waving of the firstfruits sheaf represents Christ's resurrection. However, Christ was not resurrected on Sunday morning²—the day of the wave sheaf. After dying at approximately 3 p.m. on a Wednesday, Christ was placed into the tomb near or at sunset of that same day, before the first day of Unleavened Bread. Since He was in the grave for three days and three nights (Matthew 12:40), He was resurrected *near the end of the Sabbath*, not on Sunday morning.

The wave sheaf ceremony took place on Sunday morning at the time of the morning sacrifice (at approximately 9 a.m.). Since Christ's resurrection occurred near the end of the Sabbath, and the wave sheaf ceremony was on the first day of the week, the wave sheaf does not symbolize Christ's resurrection.

A careful reading of Leviticus 23:11 shows that the waving of the sheaf of the Israelites' *firstfruits* of the barley harvest before the Lord represents the *acceptance* of the firstfruits on our behalf. This parallels Christ's brief ascension to the Father on the first day of the week to officially present Himself, many hours after His actual resurrection (John 20:17; Matthew 28:9). Under the New Covenant, Christ is the *firstfruits* (1 Corinthians 15:23).

As Hebrews states, Christ "*after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God*" (Hebrews 10:12). Therefore, Christ was accepted *before the Father on our behalf*. This is further supported by Christ's declaration "'BEHOLD, I HAVE COME TO DO YOUR WILL, O GOD.' He takes away the first that He may establish the second" (Hebrews 10:9). "*He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, called by God as High Priest 'according to the order of Melchizedek'*" (Hebrews 5:9-10; 7:11-21).

Therefore, the wave sheaf ceremony does *not* symbolize Christ's resurrection. It symbolizes Christ's sacrifice being accepted forever by God for our sins. "*For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified*" (Hebrews 10:14). Likewise, the waving of the two loaves during Pentecost—which is tied to Christ's first coming by a count of 50 days from the wave sheaf—symbolizes the *saints being accepted by the Father and the ongoing process of the sanctification of the Spirit* (1 Peter 1:2). This is more extensively covered in UCG's Bible Study Aid "God's Holy Day Plan," sections "The Wave Sheaf Offering" and "The Feast of Pentecost."

Consequently, Scripture is clear that the waving of the two loaves does not represent or symbolize a resurrection of the saints. The resurrection is linked to the seventh trumpet and Christ's second coming as King of kings and Lord of lords—not to the waving of two loaves of leavened bread. The resurrection is not typified by the day of Pentecost.

The wave loaves and the harvest of the firstfruits

² While no one witnessed His resurrection (which took place inside a sealed tomb), it had to have happened near sunset on Saturday, three days and three nights after His body was entombed" (UCG's study aid, "*Jesus Christ – The Real Story*", "*When Was Jesus Christ Crucified and Resurrected?*", pages 40-41).

As noted above, the count to Pentecost began from the wave sheaf ceremony, which fell on the day after the Sabbath—that is, on the first day of the week during the days of Unleavened Bread. Seven complete Sabbaths (seven full weeks) were to be counted from and including the wave sheaf. The day after the seventh Sabbath—the 50th day, the first day of the week (Sunday)—is the day of Pentecost (Leviticus 23:15-16).

On the day of Pentecost, the Israelites were to “*bring from [their] dwellings two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. They are the firstfruits to the LORD*” (Leviticus 23:17).

The two wave loaves of Pentecost were baked with leaven (Leviticus 23:15-21). The leaven in these loaves represented *corruption and sin*—that which is subject to death (Romans 6:23)—which is why they were not permitted to be burned on the altar (Leviticus 2:11-12) as the unleavened wave sheaf offering was (Leviticus 2:14-16). Therefore, these wave loaves do not represent the Church at the resurrection, when the saints will be *incorruptible and immortal*—spiritually unleavened, when “*death will be swallowed up in victory*” (1 Corinthians 15:52-54).

The two loaves symbolize the saints of God through the ages with His Spirit. These have “*the firstfruits of the Spirit*” (Romans 8:23). The saints are now “waved before the Lord,” which in the New Covenant context means that they are able to boldly “*enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus by a new and living way*” (Hebrews 10:19-20).

The fact that the two loaves were *baked* may imply that the saints are tested in the fire (James 1:2; 1 Peter 4:12-13). This relates to the reality that the saints must remain faithful till the end, enduring various trials and tribulations in this life—which is the ongoing process of “*sanctification of the Spirit for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ*” (1 Peter 1:2).

Some have speculated that the leavened loaves could point to our rising off the ground at Christ’s return still as physical flesh, sinful flesh, and then being changed to sinless spirit beings in the air. However, this interpretation does not hold for two reasons:

First, the leavened wave loaves also represent those who have already died (1 Corinthians 15:12-23), and they will not be raised in physical, sinful flesh to then be changed—they will be raised “*incorruptible*” (1 Corinthians 15:51-52). Hebrews 12:22-24 refers to the spirits of “*just men made perfect*” now in God’s keeping in the heavenly Jerusalem.

Second, the leavened loaves did not become unleavened in the wave-offering process. So how were they acceptable before God? Leviticus 23 shows them waved alongside other offerings symbolizing Christ’s work, including a sin offering—which was not required for the wave sheaf offering. This reveals that it is Jesus’ atonement for sin, and His completed work, that makes the people of God acceptable while they remain in the flesh and beset by sin. This describes the condition of the saints in this life—not their condition when completely unleavened and sinless in the resurrection.

Of course, receiving a portion of the Holy Spirit now is in anticipation of the fullness of the Spirit at the resurrection, when the saints will be sinless (Romans 8:23; Ephesians 1:13-14). But while Pentecost looks forward to that final stage, it does not portray the resurrection itself—as does the next feast, the Feast of Trumpets. As already shown, the resurrection of the saints is aligned with the blowing of the seventh trumpet and the events surrounding Christ’s *second coming*.

Furthermore, it is important to understand that a wave offering did *not* directly symbolize resurrection and ascension to heaven. A wave offering—whether the sheaf or the loaves—symbolizes only the presenting of something to God, who dwells in heaven above. As an illustration, the Levites were presented as a wave offering in Numbers chapter 8, being figuratively lifted up while remaining on the ground. In parallel, the wave loaves of Pentecost represent the saints being presented to God for acceptance in this age—while still on the ground, yet with the anticipation of future glory, as described in Ephesians 2:4-7³.

It should also be noted that Jesus as the firstfruits, *did* ascend into heaven—but this was specifically to present the blood of His sacrifice in the heavenly Holy of Holies. It was not simply as the fulfillment of a lifted-up wave offering, which does not in itself require a literal ascent to heaven.

Nevertheless, we now have access to God’s throne through prayer, though we do *not* literally go to heaven: *“Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water”* (Hebrews 10:19-22).

We should also consider that the firstfruits offering depicted by Pentecost is the ongoing harvesting of the saints from the time of Abel until Christ’s second coming. This pictures the saints being sanctified by the Spirit (2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2), overcoming until the end (Matthew 24:13), and dying *“in the faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off”* (Hebrews 11:13), awaiting perfection at the seventh trumpet.

When Jesus spoke of the fields being ripe for harvest, He meant at that time—calling people into His family then (John 4:35-36). And even more pointedly, the final harvesting of each mature stalk incurs death—true for both plants and people.

The harvesting of the *firstfruits of the Spirit* has thus been occurring generationally through the conversion and death of God’s saints since Abel. Yet they have not yet received the promise: *“And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us”* (Hebrews 11:39-40).

³ Refer to UCG’s Bible Commentary notes on Numbers 8 for more detail.

The gift of eternal life and the reward to be given to each saint according to their works awaits those faithful brethren who have died throughout the ages. They are waiting for the resurrection at Christ's return.

This gives us yet more reason to understand Pentecost as pointing to the "*church age*" rather than to the resurrection. The sounding of the seventh trumpet, and the events it triggers, are symbolized by the next festival in God's Holy Day plan—the Feast of Trumpets.

Some factors of prophecy and timing—refuting false concepts

Consider that *if* the last trumpet blown by angels—signaling the resurrection—were to sound at Pentecost, then in the fulfillment of the Feast of Trumpets to follow there would be no angelic seventh trumpet left to blow. Some contend that the Feast of Trumpets (*Yom Teruah*, or “day of loud noise”) has nothing to do with trumpets, but rams' horns and metal trumpets are clearly associated with *teruah* throughout Scripture (Leviticus 25:9, Joshua 6:5, Psalm 47:5, Numbers 10:5-9).

A Pentecost resurrection would require two returns of Jesus Christ to the earth—a type of rapture theory. No verse in the Bible—particularly those predictions by Jesus in the gospels, Paul in 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 1 Corinthians 15:52 and John in Revelation 1:7—allows for two returns.

Additionally, the two witnesses are clearly among the firstfruits. According to Scripture, they are to die three and a half days before the events surrounding Christ's return symbolized by the Feast of Trumpets (Revelation 11:12, 15). But if they were changed into spirit beings at Pentecost along with the other firstfruits, how can they die later—three and a half days before the last trumpet which we have proved is represented by the Feast of Trumpets?

As explained, the Feast of Trumpets does symbolize the resurrection with all the related events of Christ's return, including the period of “*the seven last plagues*” and warfare (Revelation 15-16).

The last plagues must unfold over a short period of time since it includes the absence of drinkable water on a scorched earth (Revelation 16:1, 4). How could such extreme conditions persist for an extended period of time? No life on earth would exist beyond a very short period. A short time frame is far more consistent with the events described in the text.

What the saints do immediately after being resurrected and the final battle (Revelation 16), would involve some degree of conjecture, which is not the purpose of this paper. The purpose of this paper is to describe which Holy Day represents the resurrection of the saints. Some elements of the book of Revelation are literal, while much is figurative, and the precise timing and location of some events such as the marriage supper are not explicitly stated. We must be careful not to interpret spiritual events and symbols through the lens of human time constraints.

In historical progression, Pentecost points to the saints *in this Church age* up to the return of Christ, while Trumpets focuses more directly on the events surrounding Christ's return and the resurrection at the last trumpet. This is consistent with Pentecost being a *spring* festival rather

than a fall festival—the spring feasts portraying events belonging to *this age*, and the fall feasts portraying events belonging to *the age to come*.

All of God's feasts—both spring and fall—will find their ultimate fulfillment in that future age. Nevertheless, the successive feasts portray a historical progression from this age into the one to come.

May we all continue to grow in a fuller understanding of these richly meaningful Feasts of God.

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