

# The Tribulation

Overview of Revelation

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**Provocative Question: Will God really pour out His wrath on the earth?**

## **What is the Tribulation?**

It is the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel, the second half of which Jesus called Great Tribulation which would immediately follow the Abomination of Desolation...

*Matt 24:21-22 – For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved*

## **Why don't we hear about the Tribulation from the pulpit?**

- It's scary and scaring people to Christ is no longer considered a valid evangelical approach.
- The book of Revelation is widely allegorized so that it just represents the spiritual battle between good and evil.
- The book of Revelation is not hard to understand, it is just hard to believe.
- It is Bible prophecy; not considered relevant to the here and now (...and we're in the Age of Scoffers)

## **Why is a working understanding of the Tribulation important?**

- As we see the stage being set for the Tribulation, it gives us a sense of urgency for God's calling.
- It is a key doctrine for understanding end time events... get the doctrine of the Tribulation wrong and your eschatology will be all mess up.
- We should expect and thus be ready for birth-pangs of the Tribulation.

## **Why should we consider the book of Revelation to generally be in chronological order?**

Because this is what Jesus told the Apostle John...

*Rev 1:19 – Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.*

**How do the letters to the 7 churches in Rev 2 & 3 reinforce the idea that the book of Revelation is in chronological order?**

The characteristics of the churches parallel the general state of the church in history.

## **4:1 – What happens immediately after the chronological description of the Church Age?**

A picture of the rapture of the church followed by a description of the throne of God in heaven...

*Rev 4:1 – After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this."*

It is interesting to note that the church is only represented as being in heaven through-out the description of the Tribulation on earth in Revelation.

## **Rev 5:9-10 – Who is it who sang a new song to the Lamb in heaven?**

*You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.*

This has to be talking about the church in heaven.

## **Rev 6 – What happens at the beginning of the Tribulation on earth?**

The seal judgments, the first four being the referred to as the four horses of the apocalypse:

1. The conqueror – emergence of the Antichrist
2. Conflict – peace taken from the earth
3. Scarcity – a day's food will cost a day's labor
4. Death – 1/4 of population killed by war, hunger, beasts of the earth (pestilence)
5. Martyrs – persecution of Christians
6. Earthquakes & cosmic signs

## **Rev 6:15-16 – How will the preppers fare during the Tribulation?**

*And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!"*

Isn't it interesting to note that those hiding in their bunkers know very well who is behind the calamities that will be befalling the earth?

### **Rev 7 – What else happens at the beginning of the Tribulation?**

God seals 144,000 Jews, 12,000 from each tribe. This represents all of Israel. These will be the evangelists that God raises up to replace the church. They sealed meaning they are supernaturally protected during the Tribulation.

### **Rev 8 & 9 – What was the 7<sup>th</sup> seal?**

The introduction of the 7 trumpet judgements...

1. 1/3 of earth's vegetation burned up
2. 1/3 of sea creatures die, 1/3 of the ships destroyed
3. 1/3 of all groundwater poisoned
4. 1/3 of the sun and other cosmic lights darkened
5. Locusts from hell torment people for 5 months
6. 200M soldiers kill 1/3 of those on earth

### **Rev 10:7 – What is the mystery of God that is about to be finished?**

*but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.*

This is the revelation of God the Son to the world. The establishment of the promised theocratic monarchy/dictatorship of the Messiah on earth.

### **Rev 10:8-11 – Why is the little book John ate sweet in his mouth but bitter in his stomach?**

His prophecies about the many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings was sweet when spoken of but bitter when digested or contemplated in depth.

### **Rev 11 – Who were the two witnesses from God?**

One will probably be Elijah, the other either Moses or Enoch. Moses because he was seen with Elijah and Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-8). Enoch because like Elijah, he did not die and was taken directly to heaven (Gen 5:24). The return of

Elijah was promised at the end of the Old Testament before the coming of the Messiah:

*Malachi 4:5-6 – Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.*

### **What would the two witnesses do and what would become of them?**

- They would preach in Jerusalem near the temple for 3.5 years (Rev 11:3)
- No one can harm them (Rev 11:5)
- They display supernatural signs (Rev 11:6)
- They are killed by the Antichrist (Rev 11:7)
- Earth-dwellers will see their dead bodies on their smartphones and celebrate their death for 3.5 days (Rev 11: 9-10)
- God will resurrect them and take them to heaven

### **Rev 11:15-19 – What will be the 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet judgment?**

The Kingdom of God is proclaimed immediately followed by lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail

### **Rev 12 – What do the symbols of the great sign in heaven represent?**

Rev 12:1 – *a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars.*

...Israel, the wife of God, not the Bride of Christ

v2 *Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth.*

...Jesus, the Messiah (see verse 5)

v3 *And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads.*

...Satan (Rev 12:9)

v4 *His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth.*

...angels; 1/3 became Satan followers

### **What happened to the woman, Israel?**

Rev 12:6 – *Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.*

She fled the land of Israel to be supernaturally protected by God during the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the Tribulation (Rev 12:13-14).

### **Rev 12:7-12 – What happens to Satan and the rebellious angels following him during the Tribulation?**

Rev 12:12 – *Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.*

They are kicked out of heaven by Michael and the angels faithful to God (Rev 12:7-8).

### **Rev 13:1-10 – What do we learn about the Antichrist?**

- Beast from the sea – from sea of Gentile nations  
Rev 17:15 – The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues
- Seven heads – Gentile nations ruling over Jerusalem (Rev 17)
- Ten horns – regional kings giving sovereignty to the Beast
- Satan gives him power and authority
- Invincible (v. 4)
- Persecutes the saints
- Becomes the world ruler
- Persecutes saints, kills with the sword (v. 10) ...Rev 20:4 says they are beheaded (what religion does this sound like?)

### **Rev 13:11-15 – What is this Beast from the land?**

- Aka the False Prophet – the leader of the world religion of the Antichrist
- Land, a symbol of Israel... so he may be a Jew
- Looks like a lamb, speaks like a dragon
- Performs great signs
- Causes the world to worship the Antichrist or be killed (what religion does this sound like?)

Note: Muslims expect “the prophet” Jesus to return to cause Christendom to worship Al Mahdi, the Islamic Messiah who is expected to unite the world under Islam (interesting spin on Revelation)

### **Rev 13:15 – What is the Image of the beast?**

- An automated means to tell if people are worshiping the Antichrist or not – he is not omniscient so he has to employ technology to enforce worship

- Gesture-Tech – watched for hand motions as computer commands ...so could tell if a person is assuming the approved posture for Antichrist worship
- People fear A.I. for good reason... it will likely be used to determine if a person is sincere in their worship of the Antichrist.

### **Rev 13:16-18 – What is the mark of the Beast?**

Swearing allegiance to the Antichrist and receiving a mark in the hand or forehead making it possible to buy and sell (participate in the economy, go to the grocery store).

### **What is the ramification of taking this mark?**

Those doing so have sealed their eternal fate... they will be going to the lake of fire, see Rev 14:9-11.

### **Should we worry about inadvertently taking this mark today?**

No, the Antichrist is not on the scene and will not be during the Church Age.

**Rev 14** gives some more details about the 144,000 of Israel and the world-wide proclamation of the gospel by the three angels fulfilling the prophecy of Jesus:

Matt 24:14 – *And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.*

Angels will reap the grapes of wrath – great numbers of people will die during the Tribulation.

### **Rev 15-16 – What were the bowl judgments?**

1. Foul and loathsome sores on those who had the mark of the beast
2. Sea poisoned so that all sea creature die
3. All ground water poisoned
4. Men scorched with fire (global warming)
5. Darkness and pain for the kingdom of the Antichrist
6. Three unclean spirits gather the world’s armies for Armageddon
7. A great world-wide earthquake sinking islands and leveling mountains ...oh, and 75lb hailstones fall as well.

### **Rev 17-18 What is this Mystery Babylon the Great?**

It is the kingdom of the Antichrist...

Rev 17:9-13 – *The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. <sup>10</sup> There are also seven kings.*

*Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time. <sup>11</sup> The beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition.*

<sup>12</sup> *“The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. <sup>13</sup> These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast.*

### **What are the seven heads of the beast?**

Seven heads = mountains = kings

- 1-5... The 5 fallen: Egypt, Asseria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece
- #6... One is: Rome
- #7... Other not yet come: Revived 10-king Roman Empire of the Antichrist (who is one of the 10)
- #8 – the Antichrist ruling alone as world ruler

### **What are the 10 horns of the beast?**

The 10 kings of the Revived Roman Empire who rule the world and yield their sovereignty to the Antichrist

### **Who is the “great harlot” who rides the Beast?**

*Rev 17:6 - I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus*

She is the world religion of the Antichrist

### **Rev 18 – What happens to Babylon the Great?**

The kingdom of the Antichrist that regulated the world’s commerce falls and is destroyed.

### **Rev 19 – Meanwhile in heaven, what is happening there?**

*Rev 19:7-8 – Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for 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.*

The marriage supper of the Lamb. Note that the church will be clothed in fine linen, clean and bright.

### **What will it be like when Jesus returns to earth?**

*Rev 19:11-15 – Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. <sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. <sup>14</sup> And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. <sup>15</sup> Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.*

- His return is as the conquering King that He is.
- Note in verse 14 that we will be with Him, following Him on white horses.
- He destroys all those who gathered at Armageddon to oppose Him.
- The Beast & False Prophet are thrown into the lake of fire... the first of all who would spend eternity there.
- Satan is confined in the bottomless pit (Rev 20:1-3)
- It looks like Satan’s fallen angel followers are also confined to the bottomless pit...

*Luke 8:30-31 – Jesus asked him, saying, “What is your name?” And he said, “Legion,” because many demons had entered him. And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss.*

### **So what? How should we apply what we have learned in our study of the Tribulation?**

- God will pour out His wrath on the earth so you don’t want to delay getting on His side.
- As we see the stage being set for the Tribulation such as the mentality of yielding sovereignty for the benefit of the collective, we know we are getting near and this should give us a sense of urgency to get on with God’s calling.