

THE END – Part 4

INTRODUCTION

Today we will be examining the *Tribulation*. The Tribulation is another important event that takes place in the last days. What is the Tribulation?

THE TRIBULATION

A seven-year period of great hardship and affliction that will come upon all the world in the last days.

As we look at this important subject, we must understand that many of the details surrounding the Tribulation have been carefully hidden in Scripture. This means that if we are going to FULLY understand the nature and purpose of the Tribulation, we will have to piece together the *clues*.

The first clue I want to look at is found in the book of **Revelation**.

[Revelation 12:1-2, 5-6](#)

Believe it or not, our understanding of this *picture* is key to our understanding of the Tribulation. Now, there's a lot of speculation on who this "woman" is in this passage. Yet, we don't have to speculate who this *woman* is or even who the *child* is, because Jesus tells us who they both are!

[John 16:16, 17](#)

In this passage, Jesus tells His disciples that in "a little while" they would *not* see Him. Then, He said shortly after this (in "a little while") they would see Him *again!* Now, when we hear these words we assume Jesus is simply speaking here about His death and resurrection. But, this is not really what Jesus is saying. He's actually saying something deeper!

[John 16:16](#)

Again, Jesus is telling His disciples that they would "see Him again," but not because He will RISE FROM THE DEAD. Instead, the disciples would "see Him again" because Jesus was GOING TO THE FATHER! Now, why was Jesus going to the Father?

[John 14:19, 20](#)

Jesus was going to the Father so He could live IN THEM! Again, this was how the disciples would "see Him again"—because Jesus would manifest Himself in them! In fact, this was how Jesus would "come to them."

[John 14:18](#)

It's important that we don't miss the point. Jesus is coming to the Church, the Church will see Jesus again, not because He will appear *in the clouds*, but because He will appear *in His people*.

To prove this is what He meant He gave His disciples a parable...

[John 16:21](#)

This parable is practically *identical* to the one we see in [Revelation 12](#). Only this time Jesus tells us who the *woman* and who the *child* are.

[John 16:22](#)

Therefore, the “woman” in this parable is the *Church*. Moreover, the Church will give birth to a “child” (son) who is none other than Jesus Christ! More specifically, this *child* represents Jesus Christ manifested in the saints. Actually, Christ will only be manifested in a *remnant* of people at this time. They will be a kind of *firstfruits*, or the first ones in whom Christ will be manifested.

After Christ is manifested in this remnant, they will be separated from the rest of the Church. Once this happens, the rest of the Church will go into the Tribulation!

[John 16:32, 33](#)

Jesus is saying that when the disciples are separated from Him (“leave Him alone”), they will have *Tribulation*! This is exactly what will happen in the last days. After the man child is separated from the woman (rest of the Church), the woman will go into the Tribulation!

[Revelation 12:5, 6](#)

In this passage, the “wilderness” is a picture of the *Tribulation*. Why will the Church be required to go into the wilderness or through Tribulation? — To bring forth Christ!

[2 Thessalonians 1:4–5 \(NKJV\)](#)

4 so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and **TRIBULATIONS THAT YOU ENDURE,**

5 which is manifest evidence of the **RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT OF GOD, that you may be **COUNTED WORTHY** of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer;**

Notice that *tribulations* represent the *righteous judgment of God* upon His people. Moreover, we endure these tribulations so we might be counted *worthy of the kingdom!* Understand, when Paul says “that we might be worthy of the kingdom” he means “worthy to have the kingdom or KING glorified in us!”

2 Thessalonians 1:10–11 (NKJV)

¹⁰ when HE COMES, in that Day, to be glorified IN HIS SAINTS and to be admired among all those who believe, because our TESTIMONY among you was BELIEVED.

¹¹ Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would COUNT you WORTHY of *this* calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of *His* goodness and the work of faith with power,

Christ being “glorified in our bodies” is what makes us worthy of kingdom! But, in order for this to happen we must endure Tribulation.

1Peter 4:12-16

Why should we glorify God when we fall into ‘fiery trials’? Because this an opportunity for Christ to be glorified in our bodies! Therefore, the command to “rejoice” is not so much for the suffering as it is for the glory (righteousness) that will come as a result!

1Peter 4:17

Notice how the Bible speaks of a certain “time” when judgment shall come to the house of God. This time of judgment is a reference to the Tribulation. The Tribulation is the time when God shall bring judgment to His house, not to destroy it, but to glorify it! Why are we suffering things? We are suffering things that the glory of Christ might rest upon us.

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. Briefly describe the event known as the *Tribulation*. Is the Tribulation a time when God shall judge the world (sinners, unbelievers), or is the Tribulation a time when God shall judge His people?
2. Many assume that the “woman” in [Revelation 12:2](#) is a reference to Israel. Yet, Jesus gives a similar parable in [John 16:21, 22](#). In this parable, who did Jesus say the “woman” is? Who did Jesus say was the “child” the woman brought forth?
3. What *word* does John used in [Revelation 12:1-6](#) to describe the Tribulation? What similarities are there between the Tribulation and this word?
4. What did we say must take place IN God’s people before they can be counted worthy of the kingdom? What role does suffering (tribulation, trials) have in this process?