

Eschatology 101  
Week 7  
The Tribulation Part 1

**[Mat 24:21-22 NKJV] 21 "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. 22 "And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.**

The Tribulation period or 70th week is given more space in scripture than any other comparable event. There is more time in scripture seen on this final 7 year period than the 1000 year Millennial kingdom, heaven, hell, or any subject except salvation and the promise of Jesus' second coming.

This period of time is mentioned at least 49 times by the Hebrew prophets and at least 15 times in the New Testament.

It is described by many names:

The Time of Jacobs trouble — Jeremiah 30:7  
 The Seventieth Week — Daniel 9:27  
 Jehovah's Strange Work and Strange Act — Isaiah 28:21  
 The Day of Israel's Clarity — Deuteronomy 32:35; Obadiah 12-14  
 The Tribulation — Deuteronomy 4:30  
 The Indignation - Isaiah 26:20; Daniel 11:36  
 The Day of the Lord — 1Thessalonians 5:2  
 The Wrath of God — Revelation 14:10,19; 15:1,7; 16:1  
 The Hour of Trial — Revelation 3:10  
 The Great Tribulation — Matthew 24:21; Revelation 2:22; 7:14  
 The Hour of Judgment — Revelation 14:7

This is not an exhaustive list but gives you an idea of the types of terms to look for when studying these things.

The details provided in these passages make it clear that this event is yet future because no time period in history has included the events mentioned in these passages.

The book of Revelation is probably the most detailed look at this period of time.

It is also probably the least studied among Christians, and the most abused among secularists with exception to maybe the words of Jesus.

The book of Revelation is considered hard to understand by many. I contend though that if you take it at face value and interpret it from a literal perspective, you have a much easier time getting through it.

Revelation is the only book in the Bible that specifically promises a blessing to those who read, hear and keep the words contained within it.

**[Rev 1:3 NKJV] 3 Blessed [is] he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time [is] near.**

It also contains its own outline to help the reader understand it better.

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

This book was written by John while in exile on the Island of Patmos. It was given to Him in a vision.

The “things which he had seen” was the image of Jesus that was described in the previous verses of chapter 1.

The “things which are” are contained in chapters 2-3 in the letters to the 7 Churches. These 7 Churches are in a particular order that lay out the 7 stages of the Church age.

The “things which take place after this” are written in chapters 4 on.

The greek word for “after this” is the word *Meta Tauta*.

That is the same word that begins Chapter 4.

**[Rev 4:1-2 NKJV] 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." 2 Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and [One] sat on the throne.**

Immediately after the letter's to the seven churches, John is raptured, if you will, and called up to heaven.

The rest of the book is dedicated to detailing the 7 year tribulation period.

We have spoken about this some already but “**Why a period of Tribulation?**”

1. To bring Israel to know and recognize Jesus as Messiah.
2. To Give all of Mankind one last chance to accept or reject Jesus.

It is difficult for us to understand why a God of love would allow something like the Tribulation, much less cause it.

We must remember that the tribulation is not God's preference. It comes after at least 6,000 years of God revealing Himself to man and pleading with man to turn to Him willingly.

The people who are in this time period, chose to be there. Their hardened prideful hearts kept them from turning to God prior to the Rapture, and if you study the book of revelation you will see that they maintain that attitude of pride in the tribulation.

**[Rev 16:9 NKJV] 9 And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory.**

Men are always seeking a sign. They'll say "If God would only give me a sign that He exists, I would believe in Him.

During this final 7 year period, God gives more spiritual signs and leadings of His spirit than at any other time history.

Here are just some of the things God will do in during this time:

- He will pour out His spirit on man as in the days of Pentecost. - Joel 2:28-32
- He will commission 144,000 Jewish witnesses to bring His Gospel to the world. - Revelation 7
- He will shake men's false sense of security through three massive earthquakes and many chaotic plagues.
- He will send two Old Testament prophets, who many believe are Moses and Elijah to testify in Jerusalem with supernatural power. - Revelation 11
- He will send an angel to fly throughout the earth proclaiming the Gospel so that everyone will hear the message and have an opportunity to be saved. - Revelation 14

**[Rev 14:6-7 NKJV] 6 Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth--to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people-- 7 saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."**

It seems that this guy will be seen and heard by everyone on the earth.

Even after all of this, there will be people who harden their heart and turn their back on God.

Make no mistake. God does not send anyone to Hell. People choose to be there.

These efforts by God will result in much fruit however:

**[Rev 7:9-14 NKJV] 9 After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, 10 and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation [belongs] to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" 11 All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying: "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honor and power and might, [Be] to our God forever and ever. Amen." 13 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?" 14 And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**

A great multitude which no one could number will be saved out of the tribulation.

### **The Seal Judgments**

As you read through Revelation, you will come across three groups of judgments mentioned:

1. Seven Seal judgments
2. Seven Trumpet judgments
3. Seven Bowl judgments.

These judgments seem to grow in intensity as they progress.

### **Seal Judgments:**

In the ancient world, seals were used to close up a scroll. How wax was dripped on a seam and marked with a signet ring signifying who sealed it.

The seals that are opened in Revelation chapter 6 are sealing up the scroll that we are introduced to in Chapter 5.

**[Rev 5:1-5 NKJV] 1 And I saw in the right [hand] of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. 2 Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?" 3 And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. 4 So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. 5 But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals."**

Scrolls were generally only written on one side. This one has writing on the front and back. Title deeds to property had writing on the front and back.

The writings on the back would indicate the qualifications required to open the deed and take ownership of the property.

When God created man, He gave Adam dominion over the whole earth. When Adam followed the leading of Satan and sinned, he forfeited ownership to Satan. Here in Revelation 5, we see God holding the title deed to the earth and the only man worthy of opening it and taking possession is the last Adam, Jesus!

The seven seals on this scroll are the seven seal judgments. They will be opened one by one introducing a new judgment as they are opened. This takes place during the first 21 months of the tribulation.

#### **The First Seal:**

**[Rev 6:1-2 NKJV] 1 Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, "Come and see." 2 And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.**

The first seal introduces the Anti-Christ. He has a crown and a bow but no arrows. this indicates that he will conquer through peaceful diplomacy.

#### **The Second Seal:**

**[Rev 6:3-4 NKJV] 3 When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, "Come and see." 4 Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that [people] should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword.**

The red horse seems to indicate blood and death.

#### **The Third Seal:**

**[Rev 6:5-6 NKJV] 5 When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come and see." So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. 6 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine."**

This seal brings dramatic inflation. Normal purchasing power will be reduced to 1/8th of its former level.

Where it says do not harm the oil and the wine, many see this as indicating that normal commodities will be hit hard, but luxury items will be in abundance for the wealthy.

### The Fourth Seal:

**[Rev 6:7-8 NKJV] 7 When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, "Come and see." 8 So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.**

1/4th of the population will be wiped out.

### The Fifth Seal:

**[Rev 6:9-11 NKJV] 9 When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. 10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" 11 Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both [the number of] their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they [were], was completed.**

Part of the 25% of the population that is wiped out will be martyrs for the name of the Lord.

Here they are crying out to the Lord for Him to take vengeance on those who persecuted them. The time for that has not yet come and they are told to wait until the rest of their brothers and fellow servants who would be killed was completed.

### The Sixth Seal:

**[Rev 6:12-17 NKJV] 12 I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. 13 And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. 14 Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. 15 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, 16 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! 17 "For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"**

When the sixth seal is opened, six things happen:

- There is a great earthquake.
- The Sun is blackened out
- The Moon becomes like blood - result of the sun being darkened
- The stars fall to earth
- The sky tears apart like a scroll
  - Job 8: Isaiah 40:22 spreads out the heavens like a tent; Isaiah 34:4 echoes this verse stars are dissolved and fall like figs from a tree, the heavens are rolled up like a scroll.

- Every mountain and Island is moved out of its place and the people hide in caves and pray for the rocks to fall on them to hide them from the wrath of God!

The extent to which man rebels against God is amazing.

I read an article this week about how the Big Bang Theory actually disproves Atheism.

*"In my experience it is something common among atheists: an inexplicable, incongruent and visceral hatred for the very God they imagine does not exist."* - Matt Barber

### **The Seventh Seal:**

**[Rev 8:1 NKJV] 1 When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.**

If you notice, we jumped from chapter 6 to chapter 8 of Revelation.

When studying the book you will notice the as events are being laid out chronologically, there will be times when there will be verses or chapters that look deeper into some of the events happening during this time.

Chapter 7 for example tells us about the 144,000 Jewish witnesses.

**[Rev 7:4 NKJV] 4 And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred [and] forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel [were] sealed:**

144,000 of all the tribes of Israel. If that is not clear enough, verses 5-8 list out every tribe of Israel from which these guys are sealed.

Next time someone shows up at your door claiming to be from the 144,000, ask them which tribe they are from.

### **The Trumpet Judgments**

Theses judgments take place during the second 21 months of the first half of the tribulation.

This final seal introduces the 7 trumpet judgments. These judgments are administered by angels and the movement is from heaven to earth. Where as the seal judgments involved nature, these will be clearly supernatural.

Many see similarities between these judgments and the plagues against Egypt.

### **The First Trumpet:**

**[Rev 8:7 NKJV] 7 The first angel sounded: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.**

Hail and fire mixed with blood thrown upon the earth that burns up a 3rd of the trees and all of the grass.

### **Second Trumpet:**

**[Rev 8:8-9 NKJV] 8 Then the second angel sounded: And [something] like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood. 9 And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.**

Here what sounds like a meteor lands in the sea and the oceans are struck. A 3rd of the sea creatures are killed along with a 3rd of all ships in the sea.

### **Third Trumpet:**

**[Rev 8:10-11 NKJV] 10 Then the third angel sounded: And a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. 11 The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter.**

Another heavenly entity falls but this one affects the fresh water. It poisons a 3rd of the fresh water sources causing men to be poisoned by drinking it.

### **Fourth Trumpet:**

**[Rev 8:12-13 NKJV] 12 Then the fourth angel sounded: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night. 13 And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!"**

The light giving entities in the heavens are struck diminishing the light they give off by 1/3.

There is also an angel that flies through the sky warning about the three remaining trumpets.

### **Fifth Trumpet:**

**[Rev 9:1-11 NKJV] 1 Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit. 2 And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. 3 Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. 4 They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. 5 And they were not given [authority] to kill them, but to torment them [for] five months. Their torment [was] like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. 6 In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them. 7 The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their**



heads were crowns of something like gold, and their faces [were] like the faces of men. 8 They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' [teeth]. 9 And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings [was] like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle. 10 They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power [was] to hurt men five months. 11 And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew [is] Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon.

Another star falls to earth but this one is an angel or some speculate Satan himself, and he has the key to the bottomless pit which he opens to loose these demon locusts.

The locusts have stings like scorpions that will torment men for 5 months but not kill them.

This is also spoken of in Joel 2:1-11

### **Sixth Trumpet:**

**[Rev 9:13-21 NKJV] 13 Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, 14 saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." 15 So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind. 16 Now the number of the army of the horsemen [was] two hundred million; I heard the number of them. 17 And thus I saw the horses in the vision: those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow; and the heads of the horses [were] like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone. 18 By these three [plagues] a third of mankind was killed--by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which came out of their mouths. 19 For their power is in their mouth and in their tails; for their tails [are] like serpents, having heads; and with them they do harm. 20 But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. 21 And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.**

This trumpet unleashes four specific angels created for this moment in history.

They command an army of 200 million demons who go out and kill 1/3 of all of the people on the earth.

Some suggest that this reference to the army of 200 million is a reference to the Chinese army, but this army is clearly demonic. This is not the Chinese.

By this time in History, at least half of the earths population will have been killed in less than 42 months, yet men will not repent and turn to the Lord.

**Seventh trumpet:**

**[Rev 11:15-19 NKJV] 15 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!" 16 And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17 saying: "We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come, Because You have taken Your great power and reigned. 18 The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth." 19 Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.**

Just as the 7th Seal introduced the seven trumpet judgments, the 7th trumpet introduces the seven bowl judgments.

We will stop here for this week and pick up at our next meeting to finish the tribulation period.