

## Solid Rock Christian Church Manassas, Virginia

Bible Study - May 23, 2024

Prepared & Presented by: Pastor James G. Austin, Jr., PhD., D.Min.

Title: The Tribulation Period - Part I

### I. Introduction

A. First things first: The next great prophetic event on God's time clock for those who are "in Christ" (i.e., those who have received the gift of salvation) is the rapture. This will be a glorious event.

B. Those who are "in Christ" make up the universal Church (i.e., churches all over the world). At the rapture Christ comes for His saints; at His Second Coming He comes with His saints.

C. At the rapture Christ comes in the clouds as Christians meet Him in the air (1 Thess. 4:13-18).

**Comment:** See 1 Corinthians 15:51-53 for the instantaneous transformation that the believers in Christ will experience at the rapture.

D. At our Lord's Second Coming, He comes back to the earth. The rapture and the Second Coming of Christ will be separated by a seven-year period called the Tribulation. In our lesson for this study session, we will take an in-depth Scriptural look at this event.

### II. Introduction to The Tribulation Period

A. Between the rapture and the Second Coming of Christ there will be a seven-year period of time on earth called the Tribulation.

B. There will be judgments poured out upon the earth that will be unlike anything that has ever happened before it or after it in the history of this planet.

C. God is longsuffering, but eventually His judgment upon this earth must come. Since Christians will meet the Lord in the air at the rapture, we will not be affected by the Tribulation judgments on earth. Compare 1 Thessalonians 5:9 which says: "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."

D. In Scripture, the word tribulation has three different meanings:

- It can mean trouble in general (John 16:33; Acts 14:22; Rom. 5:3; 12:12).
- It can mean the seven-year period between the rapture and the Second Coming (Dan. 9:24-27; 12:1; Jer. 30:7-9).
- It can mean the second half of the seven-year period, called the "great tribulation" (Matt. 24:21). [The first half of the seven-year period is often referred to as the "beginning of sorrows" (Matt. 24:8.)]

### **III. The Purpose of the Tribulation**

A. To Judge a Christ-rejecting World (Rev. 15:1; 16:1; 19:15)  
"And I heard a great voice out the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth." (Rev. 16:1)

B. To reveal Satan's true character (Rev. 12:7-12)

- C. To demonstrate how much man's sinful hearts can imagine and do (Rev. 16:8-11, 21)
- D. To humble the Nation of Israel to the place of repentance (Jer. 30:7-9; Zech. 12:9 - 14:5)
- E. To eternally save multitudes of people from every nation
1. After the rapture, the only ones left on earth are unsaved people. Many of them realize what has happened and accept Jesus Christ as Savior.
  2. In an intensified effort to save multitudes, God empowers many of these Tribulation converts to preach the gospel "in all the world for a witness unto all nations" before the end comes (Matt. 24:14).
  3. Those who receive the gospel will be persecuted mercilessly by a godless society and will be martyred for their faith.
    - a. Early martyrs (Rev. 6:9-11)
    - b. 144,000 Jews (Rev. 7:1-8; 14:1-5)
    - c. Countless Gentiles (Rev. 7:9-17)
    - d. Two Witnesses (Rev. 11:2-14)
    - e. Other Jews (Rev. 12:13-17)
    - f. Beast rejecters (Rev. 13:7)
    - g. Followers of the Lamb (Rev. 14:4-5)
    - h. Commandment keepers (Rev. 14:12-13)

F. To prepare the world for the Millennial reign of Jesus Christ (Rev. 19:1-6)

IV. The Participant of the Tribulation

A. The Antichrist (Rev. 13:1-10)

1. His wonder (Rev. 13:1-2)

**Comment:** There has been and continues to be a tremendous "awe" attached to this mysterious individual of the future. What one believes about him should be based on Scripture.

a. The wonder of his names

(1) Antichrist

The prefix **anti** - has two possible meanings. It is usually thought of as "against"; therefore, the Antichrist is "**against Christ.**" This will certainly be true.

But the prefix also means "in the place of." He will come "in the place of Christ" as a counterfeit false Messiah.

He will come promising peace but halfway through the tribulation, his true character will be revealed.

The word "Antichrist" is found only in the epistles of John, the penman of the book of Revelation (1 John 2:18; 4:3; 2 John 7).

(2) "Man of sin" (2 Thess. 2:3)

(3) "Son of perdition" (2 Thess. 2:3)

**Comment:** Because of this verse, some have suggested that the Antichrist might be Judas reincarnated. Judas is given the title "son of perdition" in John 17:12. However, that does not seem to be enough evidence to confirm that as factual.

(4) "Prince that shall come" (Dan. 9:26)

(5) "Beast" (Rev. 11:7; 13:1-2)

**Comments:**

- 1) This word "Beast" is the most commonly used name for the Antichrist.
- 2) He is pictured as coming out of the sea (Rev. 13:1). Since the "sea" often speaks of Gentile nations; some believe that the Antichrist must be a Gentile.
- 3) However, Daniel 11:37 is used to suggest he may be Jewish ("Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers"). No one knows for sure.

b. The wonder of his number (Rev. 13:16-18)

- (1) There has also been an "awe" attached to his number, 666. People have used that number to "decode" the identity of the Antichrist.
- (2) Although it is true that in Bible times letters had numerical equivalents, the idea has been taken to an extreme.
- (3) If "A" = 100, "B" = 101, "C" = 102, etc., then HITLER = 107 + 108 + 119 + 111 + 104 + 117 = 666. This some conclude, Hitler's death confirmed that he was not the Antichrist.

- (4) But this has not been the only century which has tried such mathematical gymnastics.

**Fact:** The mark of the Beast will be given to those who worship the Antichrist and his image. Evidently the number will be necessary to buy or sell.

c. **His wound** (Rev. 13:3)

The "wonder" of this individual increases because he appears to have the ability to come back from the dead (another example of his being a "counterfeit Christ").

But did he really die? The phrase "as it were" might indicate his "death" and "resurrection" were faked to gain the confidence of the world in his ability.

d. **His wonders** (Rev. 13:3)

The Antichrist seems to have a wonderful charisma. His ability to influence the world is further seen in 2 Thess. 2:11-12.

**Comments:** Lets examine these verses in their context and see if we can perhaps glean some more insight.

- 1) First, I believe that God allows us to see a "precursor" (i.e., a seed picture) of the actual fulfillment of His word concerning things that are yet to be fulfilled. Therefore, lets consider 2 Thess. 2:7-12 which says:  
"For the mystery of iniquity (i.e., the hidden truth of lawlessness) doth already work: only he who now letteth (i.e.,

restrains) will let, until he be taken out of the way."

**Consider this:** The work that the Antichrist will do is already going on.

- 2) Second, I am convinced from Scripture that the Holy Spirit is the restraining influence who keeps back or holds back the fulfillment of this prediction based on the next verse (2 Thess. 2:8) until God's appointed time.

"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." (This fulfillment is yet in the future but it is certain to happen.)

- e. His worship (Rev. 13:4, 12, 15)

He commits the Abomination of Desolation by demanding worship. In every way he wants to take the place of the true Messiah.

**Insight to the Abomination of Desolation:** Historical events, Daniel's prophetic predictions, and Jesus Christ's statement on its future fulfillment.

- 1) In 168 B.C. Antiochus Epiphanes sacrificed a pig to Zeus (the sky and thunder god in ancient Greek religion) on the sacred temple altar (Daniel 9:27; 11:30-31).
- 2) In Matthew 24:15-16 Jesus said: "**When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation spoken by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place,** (whoso readeth, let him understand) **then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains:"**

- (a) Jesus' words were remembered in AD 70 when Titus placed an idol on the site of the burned temple after destroying Jerusalem.
- (b) In the end times the Antichrist will set up an image of himself and order everyone to worship it (2 Thess. 2:4; Rev. 13:14-15).

Because of the great power given him by Satan ("the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority" (Rev. 13:2), he appears invincible. As a result, the world falls at his feet.

f. His warfare (Rev. 13:7)

The phrase "power was given unto him" is used throughout Revelation to remind the reader that the only power the Antichrist can have, is what God allows him to have (Rev. 12:9; 13:40).

The Antichrist's true character begins to be revealed. He is not like the true Christ at all. The Antichrist's power is in inflicting suffering; Christ's power in the lives of believers is the result of His accepting suffering.

**B. The False Prophet (Rev. 13:11-16)**

- 1. He is called "another beast" (Rev. 16:13; 19:20; 20:10) or "beast coming up out of the earth" (Rev. 13:11).



2. He is the third member of what has been referred to as the "Unholy trinity," Satan's counterfeit of the true Trinity. (Rev. 16:13)

<u>Personage</u>	<u>Counterfeit</u>
God the Father	Satan (Dragon) - the power behind the scene
God the Son	Antichrist (First Beast) - does his "father's bidding"
God the Holy Spirit	False Prophet (Second Beast) - Speaks not of himself but points To another

3. He causes men to worship the Antichrist. (Rev. 13:12)
4. He performs great miracles. (Rev. 13:13)
5. He "animates" the image of the first beasts. (Rev. 13:14-15)

"And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed." (Rev. 13:15)

**Comment:**

- 1) Unless God gives him the ability to create life, the False Prophet may activate some type of robot.
- 2) Since the apostle John has never seen anything like this as he writes the book of Revelation, he describes it with the language available to him in the first century.

6. He requires a mark in the right hand or forehead. (Rev. 13:16-17)
7. He sentences those disobedient to him to death. (Rev. 13:15)

Many will refuse to take the mark of the Beast and will be killed as soon as they are captured.

Many Jews will be in that number. Many will also flee into the wilderness to escape the death penalty (Matt. 24:15-26; Rev. 12:13-17).

When all hope seems lost, Jesus will return to the earth (Matt. 24:27-31).

8. The Beast and the Antichrist will be cast into the Lake of Fire at the Battle of Armageddon. (Rev. 19:20)

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It is once again interactive time. As always, each Scripture passage has been taken from the King James Version (KJV) of the Holy Bible.

1. What is the next great and glorious event on God's time clock for those who are in Christ?
  - A. The Bema Seat judgment
  - B. The Great White Throne judgment
  - C. The Rapture
  - D. The Great Supper

2. The universal Church is made of up whom?

Your response:

3. The seven-year period between the rapture and the Second Coming of Christ is known as what?

Your response:

4. Christians who meet the Lord in the air at the rapture will be affected by the Tribulation judgments on earth. (Support your response by citing the appropriate Scripture reference.)

A. True

B. False

5. What is the second half of the Tribulation called and cite the Scripture reference.

Your response:

6. "And I \_\_\_\_\_ a great voice out of the \_\_\_\_\_ saying to the seven \_\_\_\_\_, Go your ways, and \_\_\_\_\_ out the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_ of God upon the earth."

**[Revelation 16:1]**

7. "Alas! for that day is \_\_\_\_\_, so that none is like it: it is even the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_; but he shall be saved out of it."

**[Jeremiah 30:7]**

8. At what point of the Tribulation will the true character of the Antichrist be revealed?

- A. At the beginning
- B. At the half way point
- C. At the end
- D. None of the above

9. What is the most commonly used term in Scripture for the Antichrist?

Your response:

10. "And all that \_\_\_\_\_ upon the earth shall \_\_\_\_\_ him, whose \_\_\_\_\_ are not written in the book of \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_ slain from the \_\_\_\_\_ of the world."

[Revelation 13:8]

11. "Let no man \_\_\_\_\_ you by any means: for that day shall not come, \_\_\_\_\_ there come a \_\_\_\_\_ away first, and that man of \_\_\_\_\_ be revealed, the son of \_\_\_\_\_; Who opposeth and \_\_\_\_\_ himself above all that is called God, or that is \_\_\_\_\_; so that he as God \_\_\_\_\_ in the temple of God, shewing \_\_\_\_\_ that he is God."

[2 Thessalonians 2:3-4]

12. Satan, the Antichrist, and the False Prophet are the counterfeit members that make up what?

Your response:

13. "And he doeth great \_\_\_\_\_, so that he maketh \_\_\_\_\_ come down from \_\_\_\_\_ on the earth in the sight of men, And \_\_\_\_\_ them that dwell on the earth by the means of those \_\_\_\_\_ which he had power to do in the sight of the

\_\_\_\_\_; saying to them that dwell on earth, that they should make an \_\_\_\_\_ to the \_\_\_\_\_, which had the wound by a \_\_\_\_\_, and did die."

**[Revelation 13:13-14]**

14. "And he had \_\_\_\_\_ to give life unto the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_, that the image of the \_\_\_\_\_ should both \_\_\_\_\_, and cause that as many as would not \_\_\_\_\_ the image of the \_\_\_\_\_ should be killed."

**[Revelation 13:15]**

15. "And he causeth all, both \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, rich and \_\_\_\_\_, free and \_\_\_\_\_, to receive a mark in their \_\_\_\_\_ hand, or in their \_\_\_\_\_: And that no man might buy or \_\_\_\_\_, save he that had the \_\_\_\_\_, or the name of the \_\_\_\_\_, or the number of his name."

**[Revelation 13:16-17]**

16. "Here is \_\_\_\_\_. Let him that hath \_\_\_\_\_ count the number of the \_\_\_\_\_: for it is the number of a \_\_\_\_\_; and his number is \_\_\_\_\_ threescore and six." (i.e., 666).

**[Revelation 13:18]**

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I trust that you have been enlightened from the study of this lesson. May the Lord continue to brighten your path as you walk humbly with our God.

In the Master's Service,  
Dr. Austin