


V. PHILLIP JELLERSON

**THE
TRIBULATION**



**Daniel's Tribulation
The Lord's Tribulation
John's Tribulation
Tribulation To Wrath
Tribulation Fallacies**

**A study of the end time
tribulation period**

C O N T E N T S

Poem: The Return Of Jesus

Aids And Explantions

Introduction	Page 5
PART 1 - Daniel's Tribulation	8
PART 2 - The Lord's Tribulation	32
PART 3 - John's Tribulation	55
PART 4 - Tribulation To Wrath	79
PART 5 - Tribulation Fallacies	96
Contact the Author	113

The Return Of Jesus

We live in a world that is unaware;
Yea, they don't even seem to care
That the day is perhaps very near
When Jesus is going to appear.

We live in a world that has little concern
That one day Jesus is going to return.
They're too busy searching for earth's treasure
And forbidding nothing that brings them pleasure.

We live in a world where there is little fear
Of the day when Jesus will suddenly appear;
Because their minds are evil and their souls are black,
They couldn't care less that Jesus is coming back.

We live in a world that struggles each night and day;
Each one making a life in his own helpless way.
Their mortal bodies are tired and their spirits sour
Yet aren't consoled by His return at some soon hour.

V. Phillip Jellerson,
Composer

Aids And Explanations

I apologize for any mistakes to be found in this book. I wish there were none but that is quite unlikely. Some mistakes may be mine while others may have occurred during production. May no grammar, punctuation, spelling or format errors detract from the value of the information or your enjoyment.

Following are explanations of certain terms which are used frequently throughout this book.

tribulation period refers to the last seven years preceding Christ's return to earth for the Millennial Kingdom - His 1,000 years of rule in Jerusalem

pre-tribulation means BEFORE the tribulation period of the Revelation.

pre-tribulation rapture suggests a rapture which occurs **before** the tribulation period of the Revelation begins.

pre-tribulationist is one who believes that the rapture will happen **before** the tribulation period of the Revelation begins.

Below is shown how to read the Bible references used in this the book.

Revelation 19 means the book of Revelation Chapter 19

Revelation 19-21 means Revelation Chapters 19 thru 21

Revelation 19, 21 means Revelation Chapters 19 and 21

Revelation 19:21 means Revelation Chapter 19 and verse 21

Revelation 19:21-24 means Revelation Chapter 19 and verses 21 thru 24

Revelation 19:21, 24 means Revelation Chapter 19 and verses 21 and 24

Revelation 19:21-24, 26 means Revelation Chapter 19 verses 21 thru 24 and verse 26

The



Tribulation

Introduction

The so-called **tribulation period** is undoubtedly the best known and most talked about subject in Bible prophecy. Both Christians and non-Christians eagerly discuss that infamous prophetic period. Unfortunately many non-Christians show more interest in a negative tribulation than in a positive salvation. That is truly pitiful because without faith in Jesus Christ the tribulation period will be the beginning of their end.

Though “tribulation period” is not a Biblical term it is nonetheless an accurate description of a specific prophetic time period. The tribulation period is the last seven years leading up to the return of Jesus Christ. It will be a time fraught with unprecedented world wide suffering and strife caused by both nature and mankind.

The prophets Daniel and Jesus Christ spoke similar statements describing the severity of the troublesome situation in the coming tribulation period.

Daniel wrote: *And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time...* Daniel 12:1

Jesus said: *For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be...* Matthew 24:21

One may wonder how is it that Daniel and Jesus prophesied of the same time when Daniel’s prophecy concerned Israel and Jesus’ prophecy was for the benefit of the church. The prophetic truth is that the coming seven year tribulation period is actually the seventieth week of Daniel’s Seventy Weeks prophecy for the nation of Israel. The tribulation period of the Revelation will be the last seven years for both the church and unregenerate Israel.

Many Christians have a limited scope of the Revelation prophecy. They view the Revelation as a single time period - the tribulation. Actually there are several distinct time periods are found in the Revelation prophecy. They are:

1. The church age - Chapters 1-5

The Tribulation

2. The tribulation period - Chapters 6-14
3. The time of God's wrath - Chapters 15-18
4. The Millennial Kingdom - Chapter 20
5. The eternal state - Chapters 21-22

So, there is much more to the Revelation prophecy than the tribulation period. I believe we are but a few years from the Revelation tribulation because of things which are happening in the world that align with Bible prophecy. It is very probable that many of earth's present population could enter that time. Can we know when the tribulation period begins? Yes, if we know Bible prophecy.

Three of God's special prophets gave us stunning accounts of the impending tribulation period. They are Jesus, John and Daniel. We will discuss each of their tribulation prophecies in detail. I hope you enjoy this presentation and perhaps increase your knowledge and understanding of that time.

It will do us well if, as we progress through this study, we not lose sight of what follows that disastrous time. The tribulation period will give way to the return of Jesus Christ and the glorious Millennial kingdom. The church will reign on earth with Him for a thousand years. (Rev 20:6) Then comes the New Jerusalem down from heaven where the church will dwell eternally with God and the Savior, Jesus Christ.

With those glorious prospects awaiting Christians we can learn about the tribulation period with all hope. So, let us proceed.

PART 1



Daniel's Tribulation

Daniel's Tribulation

Daniel gave three diverse prophecies of the last tribulation period. In Daniel 2 he wrote of King Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a towering human shaped image of mixed metals. This image symbolized four Gentile kingdoms which would rule the world. They were Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome.

Rome has come and gone as Daniel's fourth kingdom but it is rebounding as a prominent world power in the form of the European Union. With the Antichrist as their king it will be the world ruling power in the tribulation period.

In Daniel 7 Daniel wrote of his nightmarish dream in which he saw four wild beasts rise from a turbulent sea. Like the great metallic image dreamed by Nebuchadnezzar these four predatory beasts represented four kings who would rule the world. Again, they were the kings of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome (both ancient Rome and the revived Rome of the end time tribulation period).

Daniel's third account of the tribulation is part of a specific prophecy for Israel. This prophecy was given to Daniel by the angel Gabriel and is known as Daniel's seventy weeks. These seventy weeks represent Israel's time from their Babylonian captivity until their Messiah returns and reigns as King over Israel. Thus far those seventy weeks have been twenty six hundred years long.

As we study Daniel's prophecy of Israel's seventy weeks and compare it with New Testament prophecy we will see that the seventy weeks include the tribulation period of Revelation. Here is the text of Daniel's prophecy of seventy weeks. Read it carefully and refer to it as we go through it.

24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. 25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street

shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. 26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary: and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. 27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate. Daniel 9:24-27

This outline will help as we study Daniel's prophecy of seventy weeks. It will be explained as we advance through it.

verse 24 Reveals Israel's 70 weeks.

verse 25 Represents the first 69 weeks.

verse 26 Reveals break in the 70 weeks.

verse 27 Represents the 70th week.

Israel's Seventy Weeks

Those who know Bible prophecy know how important Daniel's prophecies are to understanding the Revelation prophecy. It is safe to say that without Daniel's prophecies the Revelation would remain mostly an enigmatic book. As we closely scrutinize Daniel's seventy weeks we will see how it unlocks the Revelation prophecy including the tribulation period.

The angel Gabriel informed Daniel that Israel's future would be seventy weeks long. Those seventy weeks are not the same as we would calculate. We would multiply 70×7 (7 days in a week) to get four hundred and ninety days. In Daniel's weeks each day represents one year. One of Daniel's weeks equals seven years. Therefore, Daniel's seventy weeks equal 70×7 (7 years) or four hundred and ninety years. Israel was given a total of four hundred and ninety years until their Messiah ruled.

There are several examples in the Bible where time was measured by the equation 1day = 1 year and 1 week = 7 years. Israel's wandering in the wilderness for forty years after coming out of Egypt is one such example. Why were they kept in the desert for forty years and not thirty or fifty years?

The Tribulation

God explained it to Israel this way.

And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years.... After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise. Numbers 14:33-34

Moses had sent twelve spies into the land of Canaan to check it out. After forty days they came back and ten of the spies gave a bad report and Israel balked at going into their promised land. Consequently God told them that they would wander in the wilderness one year for each day that they had spied on Canaan. So, we have the equation 1 day = 1 year or 40 days = 40 years.

Another instance where 1 day = 1 year involved the Patriarch Jacob, the son of Isaac. In Genesis 29 we see Jacob going to his Uncle Laban to get a wife. Laban had two daughters, the elder being Leah and the younger Rachel. Jacob told Laban that he would serve him seven years for his younger daughter, Rachel.

When the seven years were up Laban refused to give Rachel to Jacob because the older daughter, Leah, had to be given first. Laban told Jacob, *Fulfill her week, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years.* Genesis 29:27 Jacob had to serve Laban another week or seven years before he could have Rachel. Hence the equation 1 day = 1 year and 1 week = 7 years.

Now we know the equation of Daniel's seventy weeks: 1 day = 1 year. His seventy weeks would be figured 70 weeks x 7 years or 490 years.

Daniel was also told the starting point of the seventy weeks. Gabriel said to Daniel, ... *from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem...* Daniel must have been elated upon hearing that because it was an answer to his prayer which was interrupted by Gabriel's arrival. Daniel had been disheartened because Jerusalem lay ruined and empty from multiple sieges by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.

The Persian King Artaxerxes issued a decree in 444 B.C. allowing Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem. (Nehemiah 2:5-8, 17-18) That marks the

The Tribulation

beginning of Israel's seventy weeks. If we add four hundred and ninety years to the year 444 B.C. we come forward to the year 46 A.D. That is thirteen years after Christ was crucified. We have a problem here!

It is not possible that Daniel's seventy weeks (490 years) could have expired in 46 A.D. If they had Christ would have returned and assumed His Millennial Kingship. If Christ's Millennial reign had begun in 46 A.D. it would have ended in 1046 A.D. or nine hundred and sixty years ago. We know that Christ has not returned nor has He ruled as King in Israel. How do we correct this mathematical problem?

It is more a prophetic problem than mathematical. It is a matter of correctly understanding Daniel's prophecy. An analysis of Daniel's prophecy reveals a break or discontinuance of the seventy weeks. This break has been called a "parenthetical" period. That is a time period having another purpose which is inserted into an existing time scheme (the seventy weeks) causing a break therein. This parenthesis (inserted period of time) will be explained after we identify the three segments of Daniel's seventy weeks.

Daniel's seventy weeks are divided into three segments of weeks: seven weeks, sixty two weeks and one week. First, after seven weeks (49 years) the city of Jerusalem and the temple would be rebuilt. Then after another sixty two weeks (a total of 69 weeks or 483 years) Messiah would be cut off (crucified). All four Gospels record the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. With His crucifixion sixty nine weeks (483 years) of the seventy weeks (490 years) were completed. That leaves one week (7 years).

Daniel prophesied that the Messiah would be *cut off* at the end of sixty nine weeks (483 years). Now comes an all important question. Did the 70th week (last 7 years) directly follow the 69th week? It could not have because the prophecies which Daniel named to be completed in the seventy weeks have not happened. They are:

1. *to finish the transgression*
2. *to make an end of sins*
3. *to make reconciliation for iniquity*
4. *to bring in everlasting righteousness*
5. *to seal up the vision and prophecy*

6. *to anoint the most Holy*

These are all to be performed by the Anointed One, The Jews' Messiah. The first three were completed at Christ's crucifixion. The last three will be done at His second coming. Notice the last item, ...*to anoint the most Holy*. The seventy weeks end with the inauguration of the Jews' Messiah as King of Israel. Sixty nine weeks ended with the crucifixion of Jesus Christ in 33 A.D. If the 70th week had immediately succeeded the 69th week Christ would have become Israel's king in 40 A.D. It did not happen!

The Church Break-in

The perceived mathematical inconsistency is corrected when we understand that there is a break (discontinuance) in the 70-week time frame. God has inserted another period of time between the 69th and 70th weeks of Israel's seventy weeks. Can we find it in Daniel's prophecy? Yes but we have to decipher the prophetic language.

Daniel's seventy weeks can be divided this way.

Verse 24 Daniel prophesied seventy weeks for the nation of Israel with six things to be completed in those seventy weeks.

verse 25 Sixty nine weeks are completed with Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem just before His crucifixion.

verse 26 The BREAK. Jewish prophecy is given here but it is not part of Israel's seventy weeks. It is an inserted time period known as the Church Age which separates the 69th and 70th weeks.

verse 27 This is Israel's 70th week which is the tribulation of Revelation.

THE BREAK - *And after three score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself...* Verse 26 Jesus Christ is Daniel's Messiah who was to be cut off *after three score and two weeks*. (that 62 weeks after the first 7 weeks for a total of 69 weeks or 483 years). Daniel prophesied that the Messiah, Jesus Christ, would be *cut off* (crucified) **after** the 69th week.

Equally important is the fact that the death of Jesus Christ did not occur in the 70th week either. If it had the seventy weeks (490 years) would have

The Tribulation

expired no more than seven years after His death. Christ would then have had to return to rule in Jerusalem. Of course He did not.

Skillful Bible chronologists calculate that the 69th week (483 years) ended with Christ's farewell entry into Jerusalem in 33 A.D. a few days before His crucifixion. Jesus knew the historic significance of His final entry into Jerusalem. Luke reported Jesus lamenting over Jerusalem and saying,

If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation. Luke 19:42-44 see also Matthew 21:1-11

Jesus told the Jews that they did not recognize the prophetic significance of what was happening. They did not know that they were being visited by their Messiah. They would not know that his impending crucifixion was the "cutting off" of their Messiah which Daniel prophesied over five centuries earlier. Because the Jews did not recognize their Messiah Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed and the Jews were scattered forty years later by the Roman army.

The significance of this point demands repeating. Christ's farewell entry into Jerusalem (some have called it His triumphant entry) ended the 69th week of Israel's seventy weeks. His crucifixion a few days later came **after** the 69th week and **before** the 70th week. That means that Christ's death occurred in another time frame separating the 69th and 70th weeks of Israel's seventy weeks. That separation is now two thousand years long.

What is this inserted time frame between the 69th and 70th weeks? It is a period of time in which God is dealing in a special way with both Israel and the Gentile nations. This time is called the **day of salvation**. II Corinthians 6:2 It has also been called the Church Age. It is doubtful that Daniel perceived this break in the seventy weeks because he knew nothing of the Church. Because we are in the Church Age and have God's New Covenant (the New Testament) the break in Israel's seventy weeks is understood.

The Tribulation

Here is a twister. Daniel's prophecy in Daniel 9:26 was for Israel but it falls in the time of the church. The Church Age forms the break between Israel's 69th and 70th weeks. Verse 26 opens with, *And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself...* The New Testament positively identifies Jesus Christ as the Messiah of Daniel's prophecy. The Jews' Messiah and the church's Christ are the same person - God's Anointed One.

The apostle Andrew introduced Jesus to his brother Peter saying, *We have found the Messias, which is being interpreted, the Christ.* John 1:41 Jesus did not object to being identified as the Jews' Messiah. Later Peter said to Jesus, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.* Matthew 16:16 "Christ" is the Greek title for Messiah which means anointed. Jesus Christ is the Messiah of Daniel's prophecy of seventy weeks.

Daniel prophesied that the Messiah would be *cut off*. Then he said something very interesting about the "cutting off" of the Messiah. *And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself...* Daniel knew that the Messiah would not deserve death but He would die for the nation of Israel. It was not known to Daniel that the Jews' Messiah would actually die for the church which includes Jews and Gentiles.

The Jews sacrificed lambs for their sins for thousands of years. This pointed to the sacrifice of their Messiah Lamb which they failed to grasp. They looked for a Messiah who would restore the glorious kingdom of Israel. (Luke 24:21, Acts 1:6) They did not understand that their Messiah would be a suffering Savior before He would be the King of kings.

The Lamb Of Salvation

The New Testament clearly identifies Jesus Christ is the Jews' Messiah. We know that He was crucified (cut off) for both the Jews and Gentiles - for all mankind. That Jesus Christ was the sacrificial Lamb of God is undeniable. We are all familiar with John the Baptist's introduction of Jesus.

Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world of the world. John 1:29 Notice that *Lamb* is with a capital L. This Lamb is not an animal but a precious person. The Bible tells us that the blood of animals could not possibly take away man's sin. *For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.* Hebrews 10:4

The Tribulation

Therefore God provided His own Lamb whose blood could wash away the sins of mankind. This Lamb was God's Son, Jesus Christ. Only His blood is sufficient to cleanse mankind from sin. John wrote in Revelation, ...*Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.*

Revelation 1:5

At the Last Supper Jesus passed the cup of wine for His disciples to drink and said, *This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.* Luke 22:20 In Old Testament time sin was appeased by the blood of sacrificed animals until the blood of Jesus Christ was offered. All sin for all time is remitted only by the blood of Jesus Christ. *For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.*

Matthew 26:28

Daniel understood the Messiah's death to be for Israel but we know that His death was not for the nation of Israel alone. If it had been He would have been *cut off* or crucified in the seventy weeks that God assigned to Israel. He was not. Jesus Christ was crucified in a divinely inserted time period which we know as the Church Age. Christ's life and death was for the salvation of all souls - Jews and Gentiles.

Luke 19:10 Jesus said of His earthly mission, *For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.* Jesus sought to save the souls of all people not just the Jews.

Matthew 16:18 Jesus said: ...*and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.* Jesus came to build His church not the nation of Israel.

Ephesians 5:25 *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.* Pretty clear. Jesus Christ, the Jews' Messiah, was *cut off* (crucified) for the church which has souls from all nations.

Jesus will one day save the nation of Israel from destruction but His death on the cross was to save their souls. He died for the sins of the Jewish people. Read what the angel Gabriel told Joseph about Mary's unborn child. ...*And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.* Matthew 1:21

The Tribulation

Jesus came to bring salvation (deliverance from sin) to all people but to the Jews first. When Jesus sent forth the twelve disciples He commanded them to go to the Jews only. (Matthew 10:5-6) Paul said that God's salvation was for everyone but it was to be given to the Jews first. (Romans 1:16) That notwithstanding, Jesus Christ will save the nation of Israel from physical destruction and spiritual blindness at His second coming. All Israel will accept and serve Him in the Millennial Kingdom.

So, Israel's seventy weeks have been interrupted by their Messiah as the Savior of the world. He came to implement God's new covenant established with His blood. By this covenant Christ is building a new spiritual nation, the church. The church is of grace whereas Israel was under the Law. It is therefore necessary that the church occupies a time frame unconnected to Israel's seventy weeks. The duration of the Church Age is unknown but it stands between Israel's 69th and 70th weeks.

THE BREAK continued....

There is another event in Daniel 9:26 which calls for a time frame apart from Israel's seventy weeks. Daniel described it this way. *...and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary...* The city here is Jerusalem which Daniel prophesied would be rebuilt and the sanctuary is the Jewish temple.

Daniel penned this prophecy in the sixth century B.C. and it was fulfilled in the first century A.D. The *prince that shall come* is the Antichrist of the tribulation period who emerges out of the revived Roman Empire. That makes *the people of the prince that shall come* Romans. History records General Titus and the Roman army burning Jerusalem and completely destroying the temple in 70 A.D. Forty years earlier Jesus had prophesied this destruction. (Matthew 24:2)

This event did not occur in the sixty nine weeks of Daniel's prophecy because they ended just BEFORE the crucifixion of Christ. Neither did it happen in the 70th week because if it had then the seventy weeks (490 years) would have ended no later than 77 A.D. Jesus Christ would have then come back and assumed the throne as King of Israel. That did not happen.

The Tribulation

The demolition of Jerusalem and the temple in 70 A.D. by the Romans fulfilled Daniel's prophecy in verse 26. *...and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary...* It occurred between the 69th and 70th weeks of Israel's seventy weeks. It took place in the church Age which has suspended Israel's 70th week.

We have accounted for sixty nine of Daniel's seventy weeks which ended a few days before Christ's crucifixion. Since then we have been in a parenthetical (inserted) time frame called the Church Age which is separate from Israel's seventy weeks. In other words, God stopped Israel's seventy weeks time clock after sixty nine weeks to accomplish another work. That work is a work of grace through Jesus Christ as He builds His church.

The suspension of Israel's seventy weeks by the Church Age was necessary for Israel. Paul explained wonderfully Israel's fall from God's favor in his treatise to the Romans. *I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.* Romans 11:11

Israel had been the window through which God showed Himself to the world. Israel stumbled (sinned) through disbelief and disobedience and God set them aside for a new window, the church. Salvation came to the Jews first in the person of Jesus Christ (Romans 1:16) but they rejected it. God then granted it to the Gentiles and the church was born which is sandwiched between Israel's 69th and 70th weeks.

God had a specific purpose for granting salvation to the Gentiles. This will surprise many Christians but God intends for the church to make the Jews jealous. Paul said it was *to provoke them to jealousy*. Israel is to see in the church the God whom they forsook and be moved to return to Him. Jews must come to God through faith in Jesus Christ and become part of the church as the Gentiles do. We are all one in the church. (Galatians 3:28)

The Seventieth Week

We turn now to the last week of Israel's allotted seventy weeks. Daniel opened his description of the 70th week with, *And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease...* Daniel 9:27

The Tribulation

The time period of a *week* (singular) is given twice. This is the 70th week of Daniel's seventy weeks in verse 24. This is the final seven years of the 490 years that God granted Israel. When we finish this study it will be clear that Daniel's 70th week is the tribulation period of Revelation.

he in verse 27 is *the prince that shall come* of verse 26. *he* is the beast of the Revelation - the Antichrist of the tribulation period. *he* will be the cruelest, vilest ruler the world will see. Though *he* is yet future *he* is much closer than most Christians imagine. Perceptive prophecy preachers agree that many of the world's present population could be here to greet *he*.

Daniel's 70th week, the week of *the prince that shall come*, can easily be connected to The Revelation. That will prove that Israel's 70th week remains before us because the prophecies of Revelation are yet future. Perceptive prophecy students recognize that Israel's seventieth week and the time of the Revelation are the same.

Of the 70th week Daniel writes, *And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease...* The 70th week is the tribulation of Revelation. The 70th week revolves around *he* who is *the prince that shall come*. *he* will be the Antichrist, the head of the end time Roman Empire.

What will *he, the prince that shall come*, do? Daniel said, *And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate...* verse 27

Two notable feats of *the prince that shall come* are foretold by Daniel. The first is admirable while the second is arrogant. Israel will be desperate for that which they have had little of - peace. The Antichrist will initiate the 70th week with a peace pact with Israel. Surely most of the Middle East would have to be part of any such peace treaty. Israel will rebuild their temple and reinstate temple worship and animal sacrifice.

Bringing peace to Israel will be a superhuman feat which will be applauded by the whole world. Since Israel's rebirth in 1948 they have faced perpetual peril from surrounding enemy nations. The Jews have lived with constant threat, harassment and attack by their Arabic cousins. When the Antichrist brings peace to Israel the world will hail him as peacemaker

The Tribulation

and will democratically elevate him to world power.

Israel is not alone in longing for peace. The whole world is weary for peace but it remains elusive. World War I was hailed by many as the last war. Some thought that peace would reign after World War II. World leaders keep pursuing and promising peace but are not able to deliver. Now there is the emerging paradigm that democratizing the world will create peace. What is really disturbing is that many undiscerning Christians rely more on democracy than Theocracy (God rule).

After being hailed as peacemaker the Antichrist will perform his second notable feat. As an arrogant peace breaker he will violate the peace agreement *in the midst of the week* - after 3½ years. He will also ban the Jews' animal sacrifices and temple worship. Israel has not had a temple since 70 A.D. but one will stand in the tribulation period. (Revelation 11:1-2) It is rumored that plans exist for a new temple and the implements for temple worship are ready now.

Two conditions will move the Antichrist to break the peace agreement with Israel. First is his innate hatred for the Jews. Controversy exists among prophecy scholars as to whether the Antichrist will be a Gentile or a Jew. However, it is generally agreed that he will originate from one of the Arab countries: Iraq, Iran, Syria or Jordan. The strongest sense is that the Antichrist will emerge from Iraq.

Beside his personal hatred for Jews the Antichrist will be supported by an anti-Jewish world to. We know of the contempt of the Muslim world for Israel but the chilling truth is that the whole world will denounce Israel. In the tribulation period all countries **including America** will ally with the Antichrist obsessed with Israel's destruction.

And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and holy people. Daniel 8:23-24

Daniel said that *a king of fierce countenance...shall stand up*. This king is also Daniel's *prince that shall come*. This king is the Antichrist of the tribulation period who will display a raging hatred for the Jews. What will he

The Tribulation

do? He *shall destroy the mighty and holy people*. Who else but the Jews could Daniel have meant by *the mighty and holy people*?

The *king of fierce countenance* (Antichrist) will seek the destruction of Israel. Like Hitler he will be driven by a burning passion to exterminate the Jews. He will rally the Arab world and Gentile nations to attack Israel. The Antichrist will put into action the anti-Semitic attitude of the world.

What drives people to commit genocide - to wipe out a particular people? It is not what but who. Paul fingered the culprit. *And then shall that Wicked (one) be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders.* II Thessalonians 2:8-9

Borrowing a current expression, the *Wicked* one (Antichrist) will be guilty of DUI - Destroying Under the Influence of Satan. All tyrannical, ruthless and murderous rulers have been fully energized by Satan. That explains Adolph Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin and others. Having evil hearts and darkened minds they become possessed assassins of Satan.

John too identified the powerful personality behind evil rulers. Speaking of the beast (Antichrist) he wrote, *...and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority....And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast...* Revelation 13:2,4

John's *beast* is Daniel's *prince that shall come* and *king of fierce countenance*. John's *beast* is Paul's *Wicked (one)*, the Antichrist. He will be the embodiment of Satan. Satan's hatred for the Jews will be acted out through the Antichrist. Satan tried to kill several of God's Jewish servants like Moses, Joseph, King David, Daniel and others. Satan tried to kill Jesus several times before He was crucified. Satan is a murderer (John 8:44) and he transforms many of his subjects into murderers.

Israel's 70th week has not yet happened because no seven year peace pact has been signed by Israel and the Antichrist. When such a peace document is signed it will mark the beginning of Israel's 70th week - the last seven years of the four hundred and ninety years God allotted them. It will also be the tribulation period of Revelation.

Abomination In Israel

We continue connecting Daniel's 70th week to Revelation as we discuss the abominable Antichrist. Daniel wrote, ...*and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate...* We know that *he* is the *prince that shall come* who will be the Antichrist. *he* will be guilty of *the overspreading of abominations*. This is a difficult phrase to get a clear literal translation. It has been translated several ways, such as:

- * the desecrating sacrilege
- * the abomination that makes desolate
- * the wing of abomination of desolation
- * an abomination that causes desolation
- * on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolation

Time could be spent on word study, translations and interpretations but it is not necessary. With the statement, *and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate*, Daniel described the abominable works of *the prince that shall come* (Antichrist).

Abomination is behavior that is disgusting or detestable. Desolate means empty, ruined or wasted. The Antichrist will perform detestable acts which brings desolation (emptiness, ruin, waste) to Israel. The Bible names many abominations but one outranks all others. Idolatry, the worshipping of idols, is the most detestable abomination. God hates it.

Leviticus 26:1 First Commandment. *Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it...*

Deuteronomy 7:25-26 Moses instructed God's people concerning their idols. *The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire....for it is an abomination to the Lord thy God. Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it...*

II Chronicles 15:8 *And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage, and put away the*

abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities...

I Peter 4:3 Peter spoke of their Gentile ways before meeting Christ:
...when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries.

Daniel made two significant prophetic statements about abomination.

1. *And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate.* Daniel 11:31

Notice the last thought, *and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate*. The vile offenders will *place* something somewhere that will cause desolation or emptiness in Israel. Could it be the placing of an abominable idol in the Jew's temple? Read on.

2. *And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.* Daniel 12:11

Daniel ended his scroll of prophecy by giving the precise time that Israel's seventy weeks would end. Daniel prophesied that the Messiah will come *a thousand two hundred and ninety days* after the Antichrist stops the Jews' animal sacrifices and places an abominable idol in their temple.

Many believe that the abomination which is placed in the temple is an image of the Antichrist. In Revelation the false prophet orders the people to make an image of the beast (Antichrist). The false prophet *deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.* Revelation 13:14

The false prophet will demand that the people make an image (idol) of the Antichrist and worship it. Considering the audacious, ungodly Antichrist it would seem that perhaps every family or dwelling will be required to have an image of the Antichrist. It will be fashioned after an official idol located in Jerusalem. What we have here is world wide idolatry which God hates.

The Tribulation

At a certain time the Antichrist will demand that His official image be placed in the Jews' temple as their god. This will be the abomination that Daniel and Jesus testified of. If this be true it will not be an act of precedence. Manasseh, a wicked king of Judah, placed an idol in the temple and erected altars in the temple's courts for the worship of false gods. Unlike the Antichrist, Manasseh did not claim deity. (II Kings 21)

Paul warned the church at Thessalonica about the Antichrist. *Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.* II Thessalonians 2:3-4

The Antichrist will fancy himself as being God because he will be possessed by Satan who seeks to be higher than God. (Isaiah 14:12-14) The Antichrist is Daniel's *prince that shall come* and Paul's *man of sin, the son of perdition* and John's *beast*. He will position himself in the temple, either personally or by his image, and declare himself to be God. This will fulfill Daniel's prophecy, *and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate.*

Daniel's 70th week is also linked to the Revelation tribulation in the Lord's prophecy. Jesus said, *When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains.* Matthew 24:15-16

What better validation of Daniel's prophecy of seventy weeks could we have? Jesus definitely linked His *abomination of desolation* to Daniel's *and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate*. Daniel 9:27 Better still, Jesus placed this *abomination* in the tribulation period which we know is fulfilled in Revelation.

Jesus' mention of the *abomination of desolation* in His prophecy is important for two reasons. First, it gives credence to Daniel's prophecy of seventy weeks. The book of Daniel has been discredited by many liberal Bible critics but Jesus was not one of them. He cites Daniel's prophecy of seventy weeks as prophetic truth.

The Tribulation

Secondly, His warning of the *abomination of desolation* is part of His tribulation prophecy which is yet future. More importantly, it is in the church's future. It is imperative that we understand that the Lord's prophecy was given for the benefit of the church. Jesus talked of the *abomination of desolation* in Matthew 24:15. He did not present His coming until Matthew 24:30. That means that the *abomination of desolation* will happen before His return and the church will observe it.

Contrary to the belief of many the *abomination of desolation* did not occur in 70 A.D. when Rome's army destroyed Jerusalem and the temple. Here is why.

- 1 There was no 7 year peace treaty in effect when Rome destroyed Jerusalem.
- 2 Neither the Antichrist nor his image appeared in the temple which is the *abomination* that Daniel, Jesus and Paul described.
- 3 If the *abomination of desolation* had happened in 70 A.D. it would Have been Israel's 70th week. Jesus would have had to return no later than 77 A.D. for His Millennial Rule.
- 4 The events that Jesus listed as happening after the *abomination of desolation* (Matthew 24:21-31) did not happen so they are yet future.

The conclusion has to be that Daniel's *overspreading of abominations* and Jesus' *abomination of desolation* are the same and are still future. We cannot leave this subject before seeing a statement Jesus made during His last visit to the temple. It indicates Israel's spiritual condition of that time. Jesus said,

37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! 38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. 39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Matthew 23:37-39

This is Jesus' emotional farewell to His Jewish brethren. Not only had they refused to come to Him but they rejected Him. In a few days they would demand that Jesus be crucified. With His impending crucifixion in

The Tribulation

mind Jesus said, *Behold, your house is left unto you desolate*. Some construe this desolation as the then forthcoming destruction of the temple by the Romans in 70 A.D. It is not.

Jesus told the Jews, *...Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord*. The house of Israel was left desolate (spiritually destitute) at the rejection and crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Their spiritual emptiness will remain until Christ returns after Israel's 70th week or the last seven years. Then the Jews will recognize their Messiah and shout *Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord*.

The 70th week of Israel's seventy weeks is given in Daniel 9:27. Daniel's *overspreading of abominations* and Jesus' *abomination of desolation* reflect the same time. The Lord's tribulation prophecy will be fulfilled in the time of Revelation. If Jesus' tribulation is fulfilled in Revelation then Daniel's 70th week must likewise be fulfilled in Revelation. We should therefore understand that the tribulation period and Daniel's 70th week are the same.

The Holy People

Daniel's prophecies concern the future of his people - the Jews. The angel Gabriel told Daniel, *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city...* Daniel was a Jew so *thy people* had to be the Jews. The Bible is replete with declarations of Israel's chosen position with God. For example:

Leviticus 20:26 God said to Israel, *And ye shall be holy unto me: for I The Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine.*

Deuteronomy 7:6 Moses tells Israel, *For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.*

Though not admitted the world senses the speciality of the Jewish people. Even people who are ignorant of Bible history sense the peculiarity of the Jews. This peculiarity rests in their "chosen" position with God. It is precisely that chosen status which agitates the world into despising Israel. A

The Tribulation

universal dislike for Jews will bond the armies of the world against Israel at the Battle of Armageddon at the close of the tribulation period.

Daniel was told by the angel Gabriel that seventy weeks had been allotted to Daniel's people and upon *thy holy city*. There was only one holy city to Daniel and all Jews - the city of Jerusalem. Over and over again in the Old Testament Jerusalem is referred to as God's holy mount or mountain. John saw in Revelation that heavenly city, *the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven...* Revelation 21:2

Daniel learned from the angel Gabriel how *the king of fierce countenance* will treat the Jews in the 70th week. Gabriel said, *...and (he) shall destroy the mighty and the holy people*. Gabriel's message was that during the 70th week, the Revelation tribulation, the Antichrist will besiege and beat down the *holy people* - the Jews.

Though millions upon millions of Jews have been massacred since Daniel's prophecy it still remains unfulfilled. We know that because (1) the Antichrist has not yet come and (2) we find it in New Testament prophecy. Jesus graphically portrayed Israel's dark days of destruction in His tribulation prophecy.

21 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. 22 Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. 23 But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. 24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.
Luke 21:20-24

Many prophecy preachers see this as the 70 A.D. destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman army. That may be seen as a precursor because the Lord's prophecy of Jerusalem's destruction is actuated near the end of the Revelation tribulation. Here are four reasons why Luke's account of Jerusalem's destruction is not that of 70 A.D.

The Tribulation

First reason. *When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.* Notice that Jesus said **armies** (plural) not army. The armies of all nations including America will be involved in this destruction of Jerusalem. (Revelation 16:14) In 70 A.D. only the Roman army was involved in the ruination of Jerusalem.

Second reason. *Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.*

This agrees with what Jesus said in Matt 24:16-18. This desertion of Jerusalem is prompted by the *abomination of desolation* (Matthew 24:15) in the middle of the tribulation period.

Third reason. Jesus said, *For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.* Luke 21:25 The 70 A.D. siege of Jerusalem was not God's vengeance because the church was here. God's vengeance comes **after** the rapture of the church.

Neither does *that all things which are written may be fulfilled* apply to the 70 A.D. event because all prophecy was not completed at that time. If it had Jesus Christ would have returned and He did not.

Fourth reason. *And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, and with perplexity the sea and the waves roaring.*

These cosmic, terrestrial and societal signs come only in the end time tribulation. These signs are seen in the sixth seal and the fourth trumpet of the Revelation tribulation. No way did they happen following the Roman 70 A.D. siege of Jerusalem.

Continuing with Daniel's *holy people*: The Old Testament contains copious writings of the distress of God's *holy people* in the last days. Zechariah, the "second coming" prophet, wrote vivid scenes of the end-time tribulation of Israel and of their rescue by their Messiah. He wrote of the

The Tribulation

final concerted push by the armies of the world to wipe out the Jews.

For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Zechariah 14:2

Nearly six hundred years later John saw Zechariah's gathering of the nations against Jerusalem in his Revelation vision. He described it this way.

And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.... And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. Revelation 16:13-14,16

Like Zechariah John described the torturous treatment of the Jews during the tribulation period by the invading armies of the world. He used few words but with great impact. ...*and the holy city* (Jerusalem) *shall they* (the Gentiles) *tread under foot forty and two months*. Revelation 11:2

God chose Israel to be His holy nation. Israel has not held that privileged position since He gave them over to Gentile rule beginning with King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon around 600 B.C. They will be released from Gentile rule when Jesus Christ returns to save them from total destruction at the Battle of Armageddon. All Jews will return to Israel to be ruled by their Messiah King. Then will they once again be God's holy people.

Now we know that Daniel's prophecy of seventy weeks and his *holy people* extend into The Revelation prophecy. Not only does it extend into Revelation prophecy but the 70th week of that prophecy is actually the tribulation period of Revelation.

It Begins Now

Can we know when the 70th week begins? Yes we can. Daniel introduced his prophecy for the 70th week with, *And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week...* Daniel 9:27 This is the official start of

The Tribulation

Israel's 70th week which is the tribulation period of Revelation.

he is the *prince that shall come*, the Antichrist, who will sign a peace covenant with *many* for seven years. The term "many" is vague. Some say it means many of the Jews but that is still confusing. How does the Antichrist make peace for many of the Jews and not all? It seems more likely that the Antichrist will draft a peace treaty between Israel and their *many* Arabic enemies.

The signed peace treaty begins the 70th week but the world will soon learn that, like all man made peace, it is fickle. Three and a half years after enactment, *in the midst of the week*, the Antichrist will break his peace promise with Israel. The signing and breaking of the Israeli/Arabic peace covenant are not specifically noted in Revelation but we can properly place them therein.

The Antichrist is introduced in the first seal. *And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.* Revelation 6:2 When this rider appears Daniel's prediction, *And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week*, will come true. The Antichrist will sign a peace paper bringing peace for Israel and her perpetual enemies.

It is in Revelation 13, half way through the tribulation period, that the rider on the white horse (Revelation 6:2) becomes the Antichrist. John introduces him as a *beast* in Revelation 13:1-2. This signifies the metamorphic-like change from a popular world ruler to a beastly despot - the Antichrist. John tells us that:

- * The *beast* (Antichrist) is empowered and enthroned by the dragon (Satan).
- * He continues as the Antichrist for 42 months (3½ years).
- * He blasphemes (speaks with contempt) God, His name, His temple and those that are therein.
- * He wages war against the saints (Christians).
- * All who are not saved will worship the *beast* (Antichrist).

The Tribulation

The *beast* of Revelation 13 is the rider on the white horse in Revelation 6:2. As the rider on the white horse he is not then the Antichrist. He does not arrange peace for Israel as the Antichrist. He does not engineer great social, economical and political changes as the Antichrist. Satan takes complete control of the rider on the white horse transforming him into the *beast* (Antichrist) in Revelation 13.

Daniel's 70th week is the tribulation period of Revelation - the last seven years before Jesus Christ returns. It will begin when the Antichrist signs a peace agreement with Israel but no signing date has been published. Even so, Christians will recognize the event when it happens thanks to the prophecies of Daniel and John. Christians will also know that the Antichrist will breach that treaty three and a half years later.

Arguably the time of the Antichrist is very near. It is believed by many prophecy knowledgeable Christians that he could be in the world today. He could be sitting in some school or college today or be in the political arena even now. If he is it will not be long before he captures news headlines around the world. Of course the world will not recognize him as the budding Antichrist but Christians will.

Remember these two points about Daniel's tribulation prophecy which somehow escape the pre-tribulationists. (1) The fact that Daniel's seventy weeks is for Israel is not proof that the church will not be in the tribulation period. (2) Daniel's ignorance of the church is not proof that the church will not be in the tribulation.

Be it understood that Daniel's 70th week will be fulfilled in the Revelation tribulation. That makes Israel's 70th week yet future because Revelation prophecy is yet future but is drawing closer and closer and

PART 2



The Lord's Tribulation

The Lord's Tribulation

Jesus preached a stirring tribulation in Matthew Chapter 24. It seems vastly different from the tribulation Daniel depicted in his prophecy of Israel's 70th week. That is because Daniel focused on a downtrodden Israel under the rule of Gentile nations. Jesus' tribulation concerned the church and showed specific tribulation details for the world, Israel and the church.

To better understand this material it is suggested that the reader first read Matthew Chapter 24 verses 1-28. You then should keep that text handy and open for quick reference.

Companion passages of the Lord's prophecy are found in Mark Chapter 13 and Luke Chapters 17 & 21. Perhaps the best start to this study of the Lord's tribulation prophecy is to give a simple outline of it.

I	Spiritual deception	verses 4-5, 11, 24
II	World tribulation	verses 6-8
III	Church tribulation	verses 9-14
IV	Israel's tribulation	verses 15-20
V	The great tribulation	verses 21-28
VI	End of tribulation	verses 29-31

It is perplexing how the pre-tribulationists can view the Lord's prophecy as being exclusively for Israel. They do not see the church there at all. That view is prophetically out-of-focus and gives a blurred picture of the true tribulation period. As we will see, the Lord's prophecy clearly paints a tribulation for each of the triad: the world, Israel and the church.

Spiritual Deception

Jesus cited six things which would contribute to the tribulation period. False Christs and false prophets headed that list and rightly so. These religious charlatans impede Christianity and the church by deception. Paul warned the elders at Ephesus that "grievous wolves" (false preachers and teachers) would infiltrate the church and destroy it. He further warned that false preachers would emerge from within the church and deceive many into

The Tribulation

following them. (Acts 20:29-30) This is happening today in churches everywhere.

There is a fundamental difference between false Christs/prophets and the other signs Jesus named. False Christs/prophets are a spiritual danger while the others are natural dangers. Death from natural catastrophes does not compare with death incurred by false Christs/prophets. Natural disasters can kill the body but not the soul. False religion brings spiritual death to the souls of those who listen.

The first sign of tribulation was false Christs. Through the years since Christ there have been many self-proclaimed Christs. Recently there were Jim Jones and David Koresh. Presently we have Sun Myung Moon and Maitreya passing themselves as Christ. Many more will come. This is the Antichrist spirit at work in the world. (I John 4:3) The coming Antichrist will be a spiritually lethal personification of the Antichrist spirit in the world.

Spiritual deception is the greatest danger to humanity because it affects our eternal souls. We will either spend eternity with God or forever be separated from Him depending upon the spiritual condition of our soul. The saved soul, a true believer in God, will live with Him forever in heaven. The deceived soul, an unbeliever or false believer, will be banished from God's presence forever in hell.

Spiritual deception began in the Garden of Eden when Satan in the form of a serpent deceived Eve. Satan has one consuming mission which is the deception of humanity. He has been tirelessly busy deceiving people - cleverly waylaying them from God. The following verse indicates the success that Satan will have with his deception.

And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Revelation 12:9 In the middle of the tribulation period the archangel Michael ousts Satan and his angels from heaven permanently. It is then that he *deceiveth the whole world*.

The time is coming when no souls will turn to God for salvation because of Satan's deception. There is a day coming when the last soul is saved. It will then be time for Jesus Christ to return and take the church out of this world to be with Him in heaven. PRAISE JESUS!

The Tribulation

Spiritual deception is a grave danger to Christians. It has been said that Christians cannot be deceived. That is untrue. Jesus warned His disciples, *Take heed that no man deceive you*. That would not have been necessary if Christians were immune to deception. Remember Adam and Eve? They were in God's will in their earthly Paradise. God visited and communed with them. Yet Eve was deceived by the serpent and persuaded Adam to sin.

Jesus raised the danger of false Christs/prophets three times in His tribulation prophecy. (verses 5, 11, 24) That would not have been necessary if Christians were not susceptible to deception. The church in Galatia is proof that Christians can be deceived. Paul wrote to them, *I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel...* Galatians 1:6 They had allowed themselves to be deceived by perverters of the gospel - false teachers.

The Bible has many warnings concerning Christians being deceived. The first such warning appears in the "Sermon on the Mount" in which Jesus said, *Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves*. Matthew 7:15 Paul, Peter and John all wrote strong warnings of spiritual deception.

Paul *For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ*. II Corinthians 11:13

Peter *But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction*. II Peter 2:1

John *Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world*. I John 4:1

Again the question is asked, Why all these warnings about false prophets and teachers if Christians can not be deceived? All the warnings were directed at the church not the world. The truth is that Christians not only can be deceived but will be. The following references uphold this truth.

II Thessalonians 2:3 *Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition*. Paul instructed the

church at Thessalonica that the Day of Christ would not come until *there come a falling away first*.

That speaks of a mass movement away from Biblical faith (apostasy) which will pave the way for the antichrist. Much of the church will become prey to the deception of Satan and his army of false prophets, preachers and teachers.

II Timothy 3:13 *But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived*. Who can argue that the deeds of evil men and women grow worse continually? They have been deceived by Satan and sin. They in turn deceive others drawing them into their web of deception. Among them are immature, ungrounded and unfaithful Christians.

II Timothy 4:3-4 *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables*.

Paul told Timothy that the time was coming when Christians would not accept Bible doctrine because of their worldly lusts and a desire for a more pleasing (acceptable) gospel. It is sad to say but Bible doctrine has little appeal to many Christians today because of their frivolous and shallow spirituality.

Paul said, *And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables*. That spiritual apathy exists now. Today's Christianity reflects more of the world than the Word of God. Church pulpits are being manned (and womanized) by all sorts of individuals except men of God who preach the Word of God. Christians are being fed humanistic philosophy in place of Bible theology.

Matthew 24:5, 11 *For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. and ...many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many*.

Jesus said that false Christs and false prophets *shall deceive many*. The *many* are Christians. Jesus is addressing the church in His prophecy not the world or Israel.

The Tribulation

I Timothy 4:1 *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits,*

and doctrines of devils. This quells all argument that Christians cannot be deceived.

Paul flatly stated that in the latter times (last days) *some shall depart from the faith* - from Biblical faith. Even today droves of Christians are forsaking the faith to follow false preachers (*seducing spirits*) and false doctrines (*doctrines of devils*).

Spiritual deception by false characters is a constant and growing danger to Christians. Jesus made it the number one concern in His tribulation prophecy. Christians must constantly be on guard against spiritual deception.

World Tribulation

After taking care of first things first (spiritual deception) Jesus named five things which will continue to be sources of tribulation to the world. They are wars, rumors of wars, famines, pestilences and earthquakes. These items have always harried mankind but as the end draws near they will become the most troublesome.

The five things which Jesus named as ongoing causes of world tribulation are not discussed in this chapter. They are the basis of the first six seals in Revelation and are given full attention in PART 3. Here are some quick thoughts on the five sources of tribulation spoken by Jesus.

- * They will continue to increase in frequency and severity.
- * They will produce unprecedented death and destruction.
- * Man will not eliminate war or bring lasting peace to this world.
- * Man will not eliminate disease, starvation or poverty.
- * Man will not curb natural disasters: earthquakes, volcanoes, hurricanes, etc.
- * These tribulation sources will reach their zenith during the tribulation period just before Jesus Christ returns.

The Tribulation

There is something about natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, volcanoes, and draughts which demands discussion. That is that they can be the direct work of God. Read these words written by the Old Testament prophet Amos..

Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it? Amos 3:6

This verse is speaking of God's retribution upon a people or area in the form of natural disasters like those aforementioned. There are many such instances in the Bible of which the flood in Noah's time (Genesis 7-8) and the violent destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19) are most notable.

Hurricane Katrina lingers in the imagination of all of us who saw it. Many of us also remember the comment made by Pat Robertson of the "700 Club" following hurricane Katrina. He intimated that hurricane Katrina was God's punishment upon the sinful city of New Orleans. Boy! Did he ever receive a backlash from the liberal element. Truth can be unnerving to those who do not have it. A little later I believe he recanted to some degree.

In my mind Mr. Pat Robertson could very well have been right. I think he may have misspoken by making Katrina a definite punishment rather than a possibility. Regardless, the truth is that God has, God does and God will make Himself known by natural disasters. Jesus predicted that we will suffer tribulation from the forces of nature which are of God.

There is also a general feeling that the church will not experience the tribulation that Jesus outlined (false Christs, wars, rumors of wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes). This is due to their understanding that Matthew Chapter 24 is Israel's tribulation period because the church will be absent due to the rapture. No where in His tribulation prophecy did Jesus state or suggest that the church would not be there.

Mr. Arno Froese, Executive Director of Midnight Call Ministries, wrote the following in his book, "The Great Mystery of the Rapture." He speaks of the tribulation elements which Jesus named in His tribulation prophecy.

"We must never be so naïve as to think that such events as the uproar of the nations, wars and rumors of war, earthquakes,

The Tribulation

floods, fires, pestilences, and others take place coincidentally. That is far from the truth because these phenomena serve only one purpose: to call out a people for His name. God does not

make mistakes, nor does He need to apologize. His resolutions are eternal because He is from everlasting to everlasting.”

These things (wars and rumors of wars, famines, pestilences and earthquakes) have often been identified as signs of Christ’s coming. That is technically not true. They will be indicators of the nearness of Christ’s coming. Luke put it this way. *And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.* Luke 21:28

There is really only one sure sign of Christ’s coming. The apostles had asked Jesus, *Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?* Matthew 24:3 The apostles did not ask for the signs (plural) of Christ’s coming but for the *sign* (singular) of His coming.

A few verses later Jesus gave the sign of His coming. *And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.* Matthew 24:30

What will be the one sign of the Lord’s return? It will be His appearance in the heaven above the earth when He comes for the church. The convergence of the several signs which Jesus gave will be a strong indicator of the nearness of His coming.

The Tribulation Church

It is puzzling how easily preachers identify Israel in the Lord’s prophecy but are blind to the church. The primary purpose of the Lord’s prophecy was to inform the church of its future. Jesus said, *But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.* Mark 13:23 With His prophecy Jesus informed the church what was in their future.

Here are some facts that will help us in understanding to whom Jesus preached His prophecy in Matthew Chapters 24 & 25.

The Tribulation

- 1 The New Testament is a church document. It was written by Christians to Christians and specific churches. It was given for education, instruction and edification of the church.
- 2 The Jews do not accept or read the New Testament. Israel was given all prophecy pertinent to them in the Old Testament. That is not to say that there is no prophecy concerning Israel in the New Testament.
- 3 Jesus came to build His church. The church has a future unlike Israel's. Jesus' prophecy was for the church and He gave it to His apostles, the foundation of the church.
- 4 Matthew's gospel was written with the church in mind. This is true because Matthew was the only gospel writer who specifically named the church. (Matthew 16:18, 18:17)

With His prophecy Jesus foretold what lay ahead for the church. Somehow this truth has escaped the pre-tribulationists. They are misleading Christians into believing they will not see any tribulation period. As a result Christians are nonchalant about the coming tribulation period because they believe they will not be here. Jesus did not preach that and neither does the Bible teach it.

The church will experience the tribulation period along with the rest of the world but with an added measure. The church will suffer intense righteous tribulation and fragmentation. Jesus described the church in the tribulation period in Matthew 24:9-14.

The HATED church. Jesus said, *...And ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake*. The world has hated the church beginning with Jesus and they will continue until He returns.

More than once Jesus spoke of the world's hatred for Christians. *Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you...* Luke 6:22 *And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake*. Luke 21:17 *If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you*. John 15:18

Why does the world hate Christians? Jesus told us, *And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake*. The title "Christian" identifies people who claim and show allegiance to Jesus Christ. We know that the world hated Jesus Christ because they put Him on the cross. That same hate still

The Tribulation

burns in unbelievers and is directed at Christ's followers, Christians.

Not all Christians will feel the world's hatred for Christ and Christians. Many Christians have a greater friendship with the world than with Jesus Christ. They pose no problem or threat to the hateful world. What these Christians forget is that they will be judged by Him who they deny by their Christian laxity.

The PERSECUTED church. *Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted,* Jesus told His disciples. The persecuted One, made it clear that Christians will be persecuted.

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Matthew 5:11 and ...If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you... John 15:20

Numberless Christians are suffering persecution around the world even now. It will only worsen in the coming tribulation period. Christians will be sorely tested. Those who possess and confess Christ will be pursued, pestered and persecuted. Those who profess but do not possess Christ will recant to escape persecution.

Someone once asked, "If you were put on trial for your faith would there be enough evidence to convict you?" Would you be willing to be convicted as a Christian? It is a fact that Christians throughout the world are being convicted because they choose not to denounce their Christian faith. Most of the Christians will be faced with that choice in the tribulation period.

The MARTYRED church. Jesus warned His disciples, *Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you.* Martyrdom is the consummate act of love and hate. For the Christian martyrdom is the ultimate expression of love - love for their Savior. For the murderer martyrdom is the final act of hate. First comes the hated church then the persecuted church and finally the martyred church.

Christian martyrdom is well documented in the Bible and in secular history. The first Christian martyr in the Bible is the deacon Stephen whom the Jews stoned for his preaching. (Acts 7) Not long after, King Herod killed

The Tribulation

James the brother of John. (Acts 12) According to church history and legend all the apostles were martyrs except John. So too were many of the seven deacons in the church at Jerusalem martyred.

Only God knows how many Christian martyrs have joined Jesus since His crucifixion. It is a good bet that not a single day passes without there being Christian martyrs somewhere. Here is an alarming quote which comes from the Christian organization, "The Voice Of The Martyrs." Quote: "More Christians were martyred in this century alone (20th century) than in all the past centuries combined." Unquote (parenthesis mine)

Think of it. There were more Christian martyrs in the twentieth century (1900s) than in all the prior centuries combined. Hard to believe but doubtless true. It is also true that the Revelation tribulation period will produce more Christians martyrs than any other seven year period in history.

Revelation 6:9 *And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held.*

Revelation 20:4 *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that Were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands...*

For what better cause could one be a martyr than Christianity? Jesus Christ was not a martyr but He died for the church. (Ephesians 5:25) Christians are to have that same mind. John wrote, *Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.* I John 3:16 As Jesus Christ died for us Christians should be willing to die for the brethren. Martyrdom is the ultimate testimony of the Christian faith.

Since Christ began His church there have been several distinct periods of Christian martyrdom beginning with the Roman Empery. Since the first Christian martyr, Stephen (Acts Chapter 6), Christian martyrdom exceeds the genocide of the Jews. Both cases will reach zenith proportions during

The Tribulation

the tribulation period.

One of the best publications of Christian martyrdom was authored by John Foxe of England in the sixteenth century A.D. One of his entries told of the martyrdom of Bishop Ignatius of the church in Antioch, Syria. Bishop Ignatius was escorted to Rome to stand judgment before Emperor Trajan. The godly Bishop knew that he would die for his faith. He wrote a letter to the church in Rome asking them not to intervene in the matter. In the letter he said,

“Now I begin to be a disciple. I care for nothing of visible or invisible things so that I may but win Christ. Let fire and the cross, let the companies of wild beasts, let breaking of bones and tearing of limbs, let the grinding of the whole body, and all the malice of the devil, come upon me; be it so, only may I win Christ Jesus”

Bishop Ignatius desired to die for his Lord Jesus Christ. He felt that that was the most he could do for his Savior. The Romans fed him to the lions. Of course we know that Bishop Ignatius was one of many early Christians who were meals for lions. Let us not forget, the lions got only their bodies. Their souls are with the Lord in heaven. Hallelujah!

Christian martyrdom has continued down through the years and does today. In the tribulation period it will reach new heights. John saw the all-out war on Christians in The Revelation tribulation. He identified three personages who will be driving forces behind the last desperate onslaught of God’s people.

SATAN *And the dragon (Satan) was wroth with the woman (Israel), and went to make war with the remnant of her seed (the Jews), which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.* Revelation 12:17 This will be Satan’s final attempt to wipe out God’s chosen people, the Jews.

ANTICHRIST *And it was given unto him (Antichrist) to make war with the saints (Christians), and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.* Revelation 13:7 The Antichrist will seek to destroy Christians worldwide.

The Tribulation

FALSE PROPHET *And he (false prophet) had power to give life unto the image of the beast (Antichrist), that the image of the beast (Antichrist) should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast (Antichrist) should be killed.* Revelation 13:15 Christians who do not bow down to the Antichrist or his image will become martyrs of Jesus Christ.

That martyrdom is the church's cup is shown in the Lord's letter to the church at Smyrna. Jesus said to them, *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.* Revelation 2:10 The words *be thou faithful unto death* is an euphemism for be ready for martyrdom.

Though Jesus addressed the church at Smyrna in John's time His message of martyrdom is applicable to the whole Church Age. We know that to be true because Christian martyrdom continues and will continue until Christ returns for the church. We must remember that when Jesus communicated by letter to the seven churches in Revelation He was also speaking to the churches of today.

When Jesus strolled with his disciples to the Garden of Gethsemane for the last time He spoke a sobering thought. He said, *...yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.* John 16:2 That has been the warped belief of many political and religious rulers who think they purify the world by ridding it of Christians. What fools they are because all martyred Christians **are alive** with God and will one day rule the world.

One of the biggest disservices of today's preaching is the failure to preach the truth of Christian persecution, suffering and martyrdom. This failure will result in a horde of unprepared Christians. In America especially, Christians are going to be sorrowfully surprised when they find themselves in the coming tribulation period. They will be like untrained soldiers suddenly thrust into a war zone.

Remember this: Martyrdom is not defeat! Christian martyrs are victors. The martyred church is a victorious church. Martyrdom brings life! Read again the words of Jesus about martyrs. *...be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.* Revelation 2:10 Christian martyrs will wear a

The Tribulation

special crown signifying their martyrdom. It also appears that they will be awarded special status in the Kingdom Rule of Jesus Christ. (Revelation 20:4)

The DISLOYAL church - The world's hatred for the church is easily reckoned but how about this? Jesus said, *And then shall many be offended and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.* The *many* are Christians. He was speaking to the apostles who represented the church. Jesus was warning the church of a time when Christians would lose heart and would betray and hate one another.

That is a believable possibility. Even now there are many apostate and backslidden Christians who betray and mistreat other Christians. When the pressures of the tribulation period come they will react more like the lost people. They will snitch on one another to protect themselves or to gain favor. Rather than loving and protecting the brethren Christians will betray one another as Judas Iscariot did Jesus.

That is a hard picture but Jesus painted it and it is not being preached in most churches. Disloyalty to Christ and the church fills the hearts of many Christians today. Disloyalty leads to dissention and division among Christians. Sometimes it seems there is more loyalty and unity in social clubs than there is in many churches. God help us!

The DECEIVED church. Many Christians will be deceived by false Christs, false preachers and false doctrine. It has been said that Christians cannot be deceived. If that is true why is the church warned several times not to be deceived? For example:

Matthew 24:11, 24 Jesus said, *And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.* and *For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders...*

II Peter 2:1-2 Peter wrote, *But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways...*

The Tribulation

I John 4:1 John wrote, *Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.*

On his last return trip to Jerusalem from the mission field Paul met with the elders of the churches in Ephesus and warned them explicitly of the danger of deception. He said to them, *For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.* Acts 20:29-30

Paul taught that the church would be bothered by two groups of false people. (1) Grievous wolves (predatory preachers) would attack the church from without. (2) False preachers would rise from within the church and draw Christians away from the truth with their falsehood. Every day around the world churches are departing from Biblical truth and embracing false religions.

The COLD church - Jesus said, *...the love of many shall wax cold.* It ought not seem incredulous that Christians' love for Jesus Christ will wane during the tribulation period. It happened back in the first century. In His letter to the church at Ephesus Jesus faulted them for having left their first love. (Revelation 2:4) They had drifted from the love they felt for Jesus at salvation. When a Christian's love for Christ weakens their love for the world strengthens.

Growing cold (losing genuine love) is a serious danger for Christians. Pure love for Christ is the power of Christianity. Christians must constantly guard against growing cold - against losing their deep love for their Savior, Jesus Christ. The one thing that will surely rob a Christian of his/her love for Christ is love for this world. Any love that a Christian has for this world is love that belongs to Jesus Christ.

What causes Christians to grow cold - to lose their love for Jesus Christ and the brethren? Jesus gave us the answer. *And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.* *iniquity* (sin) will always turn a consecrated Christian into a cold Christian. The temperature of a Christian's love for Christ is largely regulated by the sin in his/her life. The less our sin

The Tribulation

the warmer our love. The more sin the cooler our love.

The hard fact is Christians are living more sinful lives as the end gets closer. Behavior which once was unthinkable or intolerable is now commonplace. There are many Christians who the world never suspects as being Christians because of their worldly lifestyle. Though not realized by the world, they are seeing the cold hearts these Christians have for their Savior.

Jesus said that *iniquity shall abound* (increase) during the tribulation. Sin will be rampant in the church. Christians will act more like sinners than saints. We can know that we are on the threshold of the tribulation period because of the proliferation of sin-crippled churches. What causes churches to become soiled and stunted by sin? A primary cause is the failure of churches to enforce church safeguards outlined in the Bible.

It is a church's duty to keep flagrant sin from their midst. There are three safeguards for sin in the church. If faithfully and rightly applied righteousness will rule. If they are neglected sin will supplant righteousness.

Safeguard 1 - Preaching against sin hard, straightforward and often.

Paul confessed that he had not *shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God*. Acts 20:27 The counsel of God includes the matter of sin. Consistent and uncompromising preaching against sin will either drive sinners away or draw them to righteousness.

Sin is a naturally disagreeable subject because it speaks of our disobedience to God. Even a Christian, if he/she is not right with God, can balk at the mention of sin. Biblical preaching on sin is necessary for both the lost and saved. The lost have got to come to the knowledge that they are sinners and that they need to repent. Christians who are sinning must confess it and return to righteousness. Hot and heavy Biblical preaching on sin is an effective retardant.

Not only is the church made better by regular "hell fires" preaching but the world is too. If we could recapture the sin attitude of churches fifty and a hundred years ago our present society would be far more godly and morally minded. Preaching on sin once resounded in all the mainline churches. When it stopped both the churches and the world became more vulnerable to sin.

The Tribulation

Safeguard 2 - Church members must be saved. God's single requirement for membership into His church is salvation. ...*And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.* Acts 2:47 It is true that only God knows who is truly saved but no one ought to be considered a church member who does not profess their salvation before the church.

These words of Jesus are a good guideline for adding members to the church roll. *Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.* Matthew 10:32 If one is not willing to stand before the congregation and confess their faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior they should not be granted church membership.

Safeguard 3 - There must be church discipline. This is really where churches fall down in their responsibility of keeping sin outside the church. In Paul's teaching on church discipline he wrote, *But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.* I Corinthians 5:11 and ...*Therefore, put away from among yourselves that wicked person.* I Corinthians 5:13

People who practice certain sins are not eligible for church membership. If a church member commits these sins he/she should be refused further fellowship until they repent before the church. This measure may seem harsh but sin is harsher. Many churches are hardly holier than the world because they have not practiced good church discipline. Be assured, just as sin ruins the world it ruins churches also.

The PERSEVERING church. - Jesus said, *But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.* There will be many Christians who endure or persevere until the *end*. The *end* of what? The answer is found in the Apostles' question to Jesus.

And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? Matthew 24:3

The Tribulation

The disciples inquired of Jesus the sign of His coming and *of the end of the world*. The *end of the world* could be translated "end of the age."

Three more times in His prophecy Jesus mentioned the *end* which concerned the disciples. (verses 6,13,14) In all cases the *end* points to a specific event which will bring an *end* to this present age in which we live. Jesus explained that event in Matthew 24:29-31 which is the rapture of the church.

The church has already endured periods of express tribulation on its way to the tribulation period. To *endure* has been defined as patiently bearing. It is the idea of not giving in or yielding. How can we ensure that we will not succumb in times of tribulation? Read these Bible verses.

I Thessalonians 5:21 *Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.*

II Thessalonians 2:15 *Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught...*

II Timothy 1:13 *Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.*

Hebrews 4:14 *Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.*

Hebrews 10:23 *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering...*

Revelation 2:25 *But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.*

Revelation 3:11 *Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.*

The church is the object of Jesus' prophecy in Matthew 24:9-13. In addition to natural tribulation (war, famine, disease and earthquakes) the church will know sharp spiritual tribulation or righteous tribulation. Christians will have to *stand fast* in the faith and *hold fast* to Biblical doctrines. Christians who do this will *endure unto the end* - unto the rapture at the end of the tribulation period.

Israel's Tribulation

There are four major and twelve minor prophetic books in the Old Testament all telling of Israel's future including the Revelation tribulation. In the New Testament Jesus, John, Peter and Paul described the future including The Revelation tribulation as it relates to the church. In His prophecy Jesus said,

15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) 16 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: 17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: 18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes, 19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! 20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: 21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. Matthew 24:15-22

Without question the above prophecy pertains to Israel. Jesus named the Old Testament prophet Daniel and his prophecy of the *abomination of desolation*. The Antichrist will sit in the Jews' temple and declare himself to be God and demand to be worshipped. This abominable act will occur half-way through the tribulation period leaving Israel in desolation - spiritually empty.

Do not be mistaken, however, for this Jewish prophecy is really part of an overall church prophecy. Remember, Jesus spoke his prophecy to His apostles who were representative of the church NOT Israel. If Jesus' prophecy had been for Israel He would have spoken it to them but He **never did**. In His prophecy Jesus gave instructions for Christians who will be in Israel at the time of the *abomination of desolation*. His instructions were:

- * Leave Israel and Judaea and flee into the mountains. verse 16
- * Do not waste time to gather their belongings. verse 17
- * Do not return from the field to the house for clothes. verse 18
- * It will be hard for women with small children and babies. verse 19

The Tribulation

* Pray that their flight won't be in winter or on the Sabbath verse 20

How bad will the last half of the tribulation period be? Jesus said, *For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.* He then added that conditions will be so bad that mankind would become extinct if those days were not *shortened*. It is beyond our imagination what those days will be like.

The prophets Daniel and Jeremiah wrote these chilling remarks of that same time. *...and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time...* Daniel 12:1 *Alas! for the day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.* Jeremiah 30:7

Daniel and Jeremiah described the time which Jesus referred to as the *great tribulation* in Matthew 24:21. This is the second half of the tribulation period which begins with the *abomination of desolation*. Actually the *great tribulation* results from Divine intervention which Jesus did not emphasize in His prophecy. The Divine purpose of tribulation is explained in chapter 1, Christians and Tribulation.

Here is Luke's rendering of the second half of the tribulation period following the *abomination of desolation*.

20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. 21 Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. 22 For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. 23 But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! For there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. 24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.
Luke 21:20-24

In the above quote Jesus describes the peril of Jerusalem in last three and a half years of the tribulation period. It will be the worst three and a half years in the history of Israel. The Antichrist will lead a united force of the world's armies in an extinctive siege of Israel. Behind it all is Satan as

The Tribulation

John reveals. *And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.* Revelation 12:17

The dragon is Satan (Revelation 12:9) and the woman is Israel (Revelation 12:1-2). Satan is a dedicated and deadly adversary of Israel - the Jews. Near the end of the tribulation period Satan will wage an all-out war against Israel through the Antichrist and the military forces. In a vision John saw the final demonic spurred war - the Battle of Armageddon.

13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. 14 For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. 16 And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. Revelation 16:13-14, 16

Demonic spirits from Satan, the Antichrist and the false prophet draw the world's rulers and their armies to Israel in the last half of the tribulation period. Two thoughts jump to mind about this final battle. One, though it is hard to imagine, it seems that this last war will be costlier in Jewish lives than Hitler's Holocaust. Two, America will be a willing participant in this final military assault on Israel.

The loss of Jewish lives during the tribulation period will be staggering. We saw in the fourth seal that one fourth of the world's population will die in the tribulation period. (Revelation 6:8) Israel will suffer a greater loss of life during that time. The Old Testament prophet Zechariah, writing of the Jewish genocide in the coming tribulation period, wrote:

And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them... Zechariah 13:8-9
Only one third of Israel's population will live and enter into the Millennial Kingdom to serve their Messiah.

WARNING! America's resolve to preserve and protect Israel is diminishing. Bit by bit America is adopting the attitude of the rest of the world and is coercing Israel to give up their land in hopes of gaining peace.

The Tribulation

Anyone who thinks peace will come from Israel's forfeiture of land probably also believes that a democratic world will ensure peace and prosperity.

We often hear people speak of a "worse case scenario" in certain situations. How about this scenario? America finally extricates itself from the war in Iraq and immediately makes plans for a military strike against Iran to halt their nuclear ambitions. Just as we are about to launch attack we are conscripted by the United Nations of Europe (headed by the

Antichrist) to participate in a world military invasion of Israel. America, Iraq and Iran will march unitedly against Israel. How ironic is that?

However ludicrous that may seem it is not beyond possibility and it is closer to happening than most people dream. Israel's final tribulation will be a frantic fight to avoid extinction. If Jesus Christ were not to come at that time Israel would be history. Thank God it is the world that will be history and not Israel!

End Of Tribulation

A familiar adage says, "All good things must come to an end." That goes for bad things too. Both Israel and the church have endured much tribulation in the past two thousand years from a depraved world. The tribulation period will be the bitterest but Jesus Christ will suddenly end it with His return. Church tribulation will end with the rapture. Israel's tribulation will end when their Messiah (Jesus Christ) returns to earth to rule.

Daniel ended the tribulation period with the anointing of the most Holy. (Daniel 9:24) That is the enthronement of Jesus Christ as King of Israel and all the world. John ended Israel's tribulation with Christ's return to earth and His victory at the Battle of Armageddon. (Revelation 19) Jesus ended the tribulation for the church with the rapture. (Matthew 24:29-31)

Tribulation's end will be a glorious time for Israel and the church. When Jesus Christ returns and sets up His Millennial Kingdom He will be King of all the earth. Israel will enjoy true peace. Jerusalem will be the capitol of the world as all nations will be governed by Jesus Christ. People from all nations will make yearly pilgrimages to Israel to honor King Jesus. (Zechariah 14:16)

The Tribulation

The church will return to earth with Jesus Christ and will rule with Him in the Millennial Kingdom. (Revelation 20:6) How wonderful that will be! After thousands of years of subjection to the rule of unbelievers the tables are now turned. The ungodly people who were left behind at the rapture and lived through the wrath of God will enter the Millennial Kingdom. They will be under the rule of Jesus Christ and the church for a thousand years. Praise God!

May YOU enjoy these promises of Christian rule in the Millennial Kingdom.

And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. Again, And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities. Luke 19:17, 19
Jesus will award Christians the authority to rule in His Millennial Kingdom.

And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. Revelation 2:26-27
Christians will be given power for strict rule in the Millennial Kingdom.

Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. Revelation 20:6
The first resurrection occurs at the rapture of the church. Resurrected Christians will rule with Jesus Christ on earth for a thousand years.

The church will not always be a religious football for the unbelieving world. The world will not always call the plays. The game will change when Jesus Christ returns and becomes the Referee. When He comes back to rule the church will accompany Him and will rule with Him for a thousand years. It will be a new game.

This ends our presentation of **The Lord's Tribulation**. With His tribulation prophecy Jesus informed the church of the coming tribulation period and it's role in it.

PART 3



John's Tribulation

John's Tribulation

We have learned about the tribulation period from Daniel and Jesus. Now we will examine John's literary piece of that same time. He wrote with much metaphor and symbolism but he gave the most detailed account of the tribulation period. The common understanding is that the Revelation tribulation consists of three series of events named seals, trumpets and vials. Common or not that view is shown to be incorrect in this and the next two chapters.

The tribulation period forms the major portion of Revelation prophecy. It is generally believed that the tribulation period begins with Revelation 6 and ends with the return of Christ in Revelation 19. Not true. The tribulation does begin with the first seal in Revelation 6 but it ends with the seventh trumpet in Revelation 14. This will confuse some readers but if they will read the rest of this book confusion will become clarity.

John reveals many details of the tribulation period that are not found elsewhere. Moreover, much of what takes place in the tribulation period has never occurred before. This truly will be a cataclysmic cycle for planet earth and a tumultuous time for humanity. Each of the seals and trumpets will be discussed so that we may gain a Biblical view of the forthcoming tribulation period.

The tribulation seals have been mistakenly identified as being God's wrath. In PARTS 4 and 5 it is adeptly argued why that cannot be. The truth is that much of what happens with the seals (wars, famines, pestilence and death) results from man's pride, foolishness and ungodliness. On the other hand the supernatural events of the trumpets are the direct intervention of God.

The Tribulation Seals

SEAL 1

ANTICHRIST - And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer. Revelation 6:2

The Tribulation

This rider was identified in our exposition of Daniel's prophecy of seventy weeks in PART 1, Daniel's Tribulation. He is Daniel's *prince that shall come* (Daniel 9:26) and Paul's *man of sin...the son of perdition*. II Thessalonians 2:3. He is the ultimate false Christ who Jesus alluded to in His prophecy (Matthew 24:5,24). This rider gallops onto the world stage from virtual obscurity to gain international stature. He will *conquer* the people politically and peacefully by his extraordinary works.

Lastly, John showed this rider as a ferocious beast in Revelation 13. He will gain international notoriety as an exceptional humanitarian leader. (seal 1) He will transform into the wild beast, Antichrist, half way into the tribulation period. King Solomon wrote of such beastly rulers. *As a roaring lion, and a ranging bear; so is a wicked ruler over the poor people.* Proverbs 28:15

Many ego-crazed leaders have imagined themselves as a god but God views them as animals. That is the reason for the four world kingdoms being pictured as four wild beasts in Daniel's vision in Daniel 7. For the same reason John saw the final world kingdom (the revived Roman Empire) emerge from the sea as a bizarre beast in Revelation 13.

The rider of the first seal is often confused with the rider on a white horse in Revelation 19, Jesus Christ. A careful comparison of the two riders easily shows different persons. Jesus Christ cannot be the horseman of the first seal because He is in heaven opening the seven seals. He cannot return to earth until the last seal is broken which leads to the trumpets and the vials.

Additionally it is believed that the seals fulfill Jesus' tribulation prophecy in Matthew 24:4-8. If that be so then the first seal relates to the first tribulation problem which is false Christs. It can therefore rightly be concluded that the rider on the white horse in seal 1 is the Antichrist of the tribulation period.

Here is a helpful way to distinguish these two riders. The rider in seal 1, the Antichrist, begins the tribulation period while the rider in Revelation 19, Jesus Christ brings an end to the Antichrist and the tribulation period. (Revelation 19:20)

The Church And The Antichrist

We have learned that the Antichrist will be *the prince that shall come* of Daniel's seventy weeks prophecy. He will be the fourth and final Gentile world leader which Daniel prophesied. He will emerge from a revived Roman Empire and will have attained world prominence at the time of the tribulation period.

The prefix "anti" of Antichrist well describes him. "anti" means against or instead of. The Antichrist will demonstrate both definitions. He will publicly oppose Jesus Christ, His Father and Believers. Worse still, the Antichrist will proclaim himself to be God and demand to be worshipped. Read what Paul wrote of him.

Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. II Thessalonians 2:3-4

Paul's portrayal of the Antichrist sets him as the worst opponent of God ever aside from Satan. A lengthy discussion on the Antichrist could be given here but for now we want only to make this point: The church will be here to face the Antichrist. Pre-tribulation prophecy has the church leaving this world via the rapture before the Antichrist comes. That may comfort the pre-tribulationists but correct it is not.

To prove our point we need only to note what the Bible does NOT say about the Antichrist. While it is true that he will be the most evil tyrant ever it is not true that the church will be absent during his time. In reality the church has faced many antichrists such as the Roman emperors and maniacal rulers in Russia, Germany, China, Africa and so on.

The Antichrist will be the final manifestation of the antichrist spirit which has existed since Jesus Christ. Actually it lived before Jesus Christ in the person of Satan. As we get nearer to the return of Christ the stronger the antichrist spirit grows. Even now antichrists (Christ deniers) grow in number and power but the day is coming when they will bow before Jesus Christ and declare Him Lord. (Philippians 2:9-11)

The Tribulation

The fact is that none of those who wrote about the Antichrist intimated that the church would not be here at that time. In fact, their writings of the Antichrist are in the form of warning rather than a dismissal of concern. We will read what Jesus, Paul and John said of the Antichrist and see what they did NOT say.

For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Matthew 24:24 Certainly Jesus knew of the Antichrist and False Prophet of the coming tribulation period. The False Prophet will coerce all people to worship the Antichrist in a universal false religion.

Did Jesus indicate in any way that the church would be absent when false Christs and false prophets are here? No, He did not. As a matter of fact Jesus showed the church as being here. He said that false Christs and false prophets would *deceive the very elect* if it were possible. The *elect* are the church. Jesus forewarned the church of their confrontation with false Christs and false prophets. This includes the Antichrist and False Prophet of the Revelation tribulation.

What about the Antichrist and the Abomination? Jesus prophesied, *When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place,...Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains...* Matthew 24:15-16 We know that the *abomination of desolation* will occur in Jerusalem during the tribulation period and involves the Antichrist.

Jesus opened His warning of the future *abomination of desolation* to the disciples with *When ye...* Now we know that the apostles did not observe the *abomination of desolation* because it is yet to happen. Knowing that the apostles represented the church *ye* therefore speaks of the church which will be present at the *abomination of desolation*. Jesus instructed *them which be in Judaea* (the church) to *flee into the mountains*.

Concerning the appearance of the Antichrist Paul wrote, *Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means;*

The Tribulation

for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition. II Thessalonians 2:1-3

The Christians in Thessalonica were confused about the times of the rapture, the tribulation and the Antichrist. Many Christians are today confused. Paul told them that *that day shall not come...* What day? The *day of Christ*. The *day of Christ* begins with *our gathering together unto him* which is the rapture.

Paul explained that two events must take place before the *day of Christ* which begins with the rapture. They are: (1) a *falling away* (apostasy) and (2) the appearance of that *man of sin, the son of perdition* (the Antichrist). It could not be plainer. Paul put the church here at the time of the Antichrist. He injected no idea of the church missing the Antichrist by way of the rapture.

John in his Revelation prophecy noted the debased disposition of the beast (Antichrist) during the tribulation period. In describing the beastly rage of the Antichrist John wrote, *And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them...* Revelation 13:7

The Antichrist will launch an all-out assault on *the saints* in the latter half of the tribulation period. Who in the New Testament are *saints*? Born again believers are *saints*. The *saints* of Revelation are designated as "tribulation saints" by pre-tribulationists thereby differentiating them from church *saints*. There is absolutely no Biblical basis for that.

The spiritual truth is that the church has always been hampered by the antichrist spirit and antichrists. The Apostle John recognized it and wrote of it in two of his three brief letters.

I John 2:18 *Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.*

I John 2:22 *Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.*

I John 4:3 *And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of*

The Tribulation

antichrist, Whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

II John 7 *For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.*

John put forth these three truths about the antichrist spirit and the Antichrist.

1. Any person who denies that Jesus is the Christ and that He is the Son of God is an antichrist.
2. Any person who denies that Jesus Christ came to earth in the flesh as a man is an antichrist.
3. The church in John's time knew of the coming Antichrist because he said there were many antichrists in the world already.

Did John tell the church that the Antichrist would be no cause for concern? No, just the opposite. He warned the church of the coming Antichrist. Did John say that the rapture of the church would come before the Antichrist arrived? No. By warning the church of the coming Antichrist John was preparing the church to meet him.

The first seal introduces the Antichrist of the tribulation period. Nowhere in the Bible is it found that the church will be removed by the rapture **before** the Antichrist arrives. The pre-tribulationists conveniently force a rapture in Revelation 4:1 because the tribulation period begins in Revelation 6:1.

NOTE: A textual analysis of the text in Revelation 4:1 is given in my eBook: "The Church Rapture." at www.sureprophecy.com

SEAL 2

WAR - *And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.* Revelation 6:3-4

The Tribulation

The color of this second horse is fitting. It is blood red. More blood will be spilled in The Revelation tribulation than any other period in history. This rider of the scarlet steed will *take peace from the earth*. He brandishes a *great sword* signifying conflict and carnage. It is very possible that this rider on the red horse is another representation of the rider on the white horse in seal 1 - the Antichrist.

Global wars and civil clashes will litter the earth with corpses. The barbarism and bloodshed of the second seal is the fulfillment of the Lord's prophecy. *For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom...* Matthew 24:7 The true scope of this warfare and human carnage is generally missed because we fail to accurately interpret the term *nations*.

The Greek word "ethnos" which is rendered *nations* in Matthew 24:7 could have been translated "races" or "tribes." The picture that Jesus conveyed was that of uncontrolled deadly conflict between people of different races, nationalities, religions, etc. Add to that wars between the nations and we have the tribulation picture. People everywhere will be engaged in mortal conflicts.

War and the threat of war fills our world. The dreadful noises of battle grow louder and sound longer around us. Not a day passes without the clamor of wars and deadly conflicts around the world. In the tribulation period there will be civil wars **within** countries and wars **between** countries. War will be the rule of the day in the tribulation period.

War, blood and death is the morbid message of the second seal. Our planet will be turned into one gigantic bloody battlefield. Much of our beautiful green earth will be painted red - blood red.

SEAL 3

FAMINE - *And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny, and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.*
Revelation 6:5-6

The Tribulation

The rider of the third seal straddles a black horse. This again could be another characterization of the Antichrist in seal 1. In the Bible the color black can signify hunger and starvation. The prophet Jeremiah described famine induced starvation this way. *Our skin was black like an oven because of the terrible famine.* Lamentations 5:10

All of us are aware of the murderous famine in parts of Africa and other areas. At some point in the tribulation period most, if not all the world, will taste famine. Countries which have never lacked for food will suffer severe shortage. The rich soil of America will be unproductive as will the crop land of other food sufficient nations.

The rider on the black horse holds a pair of scales in his hand for measuring food. *A measure of wheat for a penny; and three measures of barley for a penny.* Food will be rationed and carefully measured because of a dire shortage. This food shortfall will be caused by wars, draught, diseases and natural disasters that destroy farm land and crops. There will also be a shortage of farmers to produce food due to war, disease, famine and death.

Not only will food be in short supply but it will be expensive. John said that a *measure* of wheat or barley costs a *penny*. A *measure* amounts to about one and a half pints. The *penny* is the Greek coin "dinarus" which was a day's wages for the common laborer. Accordingly, using America's minimum wage the price of one and a half pints of wheat or four and a half pints of barley would be \$60.00. What will it be at the time of the third seal?

It may be that a grave food shortage in the tribulation period will be a factor in the "mark of the beast." The Antichrist will use food to coerce the people to accept his ownership of them. *And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.* Revelation 13:16-17

UPDATE: As this piece is being written America is experiencing a food shortage for the first time since World War II. There is a shortfall of corn due to increasing demand and deficient production due to draught and loss of farm land. Rice is being rationed in American stores for the first time ever. The truth of the matter is there is a growing worldwide food shortage taking place right now!

The Tribulation

To complicate the situation Americans and the rest of the world are paying the highest food prices ever. This is ballooning the numbers of the malnourished and those suffering starvation worldwide. Granted, the high cost of fuel is partly to blame but not wholly. Assessing the world's growing food shortage (a little pun) in the light of prophecy brings speculation that we are approaching the tribulation period.

A very interesting but puzzling thought ended John's picture of the third seal. *...and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.* God warns the world of a dire food shortage in the tribulation period but oil and wine (olives and grapes) will be plentiful. Why? The answer may be couched in these two verses.

He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth; And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine...
Psalm 104:14-15

Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts. Proverbs 31:6

Could it be that God is showing Himself merciful to the ungodly in this worst of times by providing oil and wine for comfort of mind and body?

SEAL 4

DEATH - *And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with the sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.*
Revelation 6:7-8

The color of the fourth horse is pale or pale green which bespeaks of sickness and death. This fourth rider could be called the Grim Reaper but is named Death. He is followed by Hell - the holding place of lost souls for judgment. Death and Hell will claim one quarter of earth's population by war, starvation, disease and *the beasts of the earth*.

The Tribulation

The *beasts of the earth* is an interesting phrase. The word *beasts* derives from the Greek word "therion" meaning a wild animal but *the beasts of the earth* are NOT wild animals. *beast*, from the Greek "therion," is used over thirty times to describe the Antichrist and False Prophet in Revelation. It seems plausible to this author that John's *beasts of the earth* are actually the "beastly" world rulers like the Antichrist and False Prophet.

John saw personifications of *Hell* and *Death* in seal 4. This *Hell* was given a metaphorical description by the prophet Isaiah. *Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.* Isaiah 5:14 God warned Israel that hell was going to see a population explosion because of their neglect of Him and the exaltation of themselves.

Hell has known several sudden surges in residency. The flood in Noah's time sent all of earth's population to *Hell* except for eight souls in Noah's family. *Hell* opened her mouth wide to receive all those people. Then there were the whole populations of four cities of the plain which God destroyed for their wickedness. *Hell* was again enlarged when Israel destroyed the seven nations in Canaan as they took possession of their promised land.

Hell will receive a mouthful in the last seven years. The population of *Hell* will increase greatly during the tribulation period. With the first four seals one quarter of the earth's population (1-2 billion people) will die without Christ and enter *Hell*.

SEAL 5

MARTYRS - *And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.* Revelation 6:9-11

When the fifth seal is opened John sees a group of precious souls under the altar before God's throne. He explained that they *were slain for the*

The Tribulation

word of God, and for the testimony which they held. These are the souls of Christians who were killed for their faithfulness to the Word of God and for their personal testimony. Only God knows the number of Christian martyrs who rest under His altar waiting to be revealed with Jesus Christ at the rapture.

This group of faithful martyrs will be joined by countless more during the tribulation period. They were told that they should *rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.* This altar will receive many more souls of martyred Christians during the tribulation period from the Antichrist's butcherly regime.

The church in America is not tuned into the truth that God has ordained the church to drink of the cup of martyrdom. Jesus spoke several times about the role of martyrdom in Christianity. Here are four.

Matthew 20:23 Jesus told His disciples, *Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with...* It is believed by many that Jesus was foretelling the disciples' death. All the apostles were martyred except John.

Matthew 24:9 Jesus told the church (represented by the disciples), *Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you...*

John 16:2 Jesus said this to His disciples just before He was taken captive in the Garden of Gethsemane. *yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.*

Revelation 2:10 Jesus told the church at Smyrna, *...and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.* Many Christians at Smyrna and other places died for their faith.

The cup of martyrdom has not been emptied nor has it been removed from the church. Christians have drunk from that cup since Jesus drank of it. They will continue to drink from that cup until Jesus takes it away at the rapture.

The Tribulation

At the opening of the fifth seal John heard the martyred souls under the altar crying out to God. They wanted to know when He would avenge their deaths - repay their murderers. Some have concluded that these martyred souls are Old Testament saints because of their desire for revenge. Several Old Testament passages instruct the people to rejoice at God's coming vengeance upon the murderers of His saints. One follows.

Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people. Deuteronomy 32:43

To conclude, however, that the souls under God's altar in Revelation 6:9 are Old Testament saints because of their cry for vengeance in Revelation 6:10 is wrong in light of the following New Testament passages.

Revelation 18:20 *Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.*
In the time of His wrath God will destroy the end time Babylon. A heavenly voice tells the apostles and prophets to rejoice because God has avenged them.

Revelation 19:1-2 *Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God: For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.*

John sees a great throng of martyred Christians in heaven praising God for avenging their deaths by the great whore - the end time Babylon of false religion.

Luke 18:7-8 *And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily.*

Jesus told the disciples that God will avenge His elect, the church, in quick fashion. That is satisfaction to the martyred church.

SEAL 6

CREATION STIRS - 12 *And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; 13 And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. 14 And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of there places.* Revelation 6:12-14

A devastating earthquake opens the sixth seal. Earthquakes are one of nature's most powerful and destructive forces. Great earthquakes occur with the sixth seal, the seventh trumpet and the seventh vial resulting in unimaginable death and destruction. A time of extraordinary cosmic and cataclysmic activity is a redundant prophecy in the Old Testament. The following references match the sixth seal.

Psalm 46:1-3 *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.*

Isaiah 13:13 *Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.*

Isaiah 13:10,13 *Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.*

Joel 2:10 *The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.*

Haggai 2:6-7 *For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill his house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts.*

The Tribulation

The *desire of all nations* is the Jews' Messiah (Jesus Christ) whose return climaxes the sixth seal.

The sixth seal opens with an earthquake which fills the atmosphere with smoke, dust and ash which darkens the sun and gives the moon a reddish glow. Then comes a celestial shower: *and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth*. Stars are suns and are many times larger than earth. If one were to crash into the earth it would disintegrate. More than likely this shower is a meteorite shower or flaming cosmic debris which bombards the earth.

The third effect of the sixth seal is vague. *And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together*. Isaiah prophesied of this same time in which the heavens are rolled up. *And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree*. Isaiah 34:4

Though it is mysterious the "rolling up of the heavens" will certainly have a neurotic affect on all humanity who observe this cosmic phenomenon.

Lastly, the earthquake's power alters the landscape. *...and every mountain and island were moved out of their places*. The great earthquake will reshape and displace mountains. No doubt some will crumble and fall into the seas. Islands too will be moved and some will disappear into the seas. Earth's features will be violently changed. When this earthquake rumbles the people will be gripped with fear.

15 *And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens 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 that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:*
17 *For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?* Revelation 6:15-17

The people scurry to hide in the caves and rocks of the mountains. They call for the rocks and mountains to *Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb*. God's throne in heaven comes into view and they see God and the Lamb and they seek to hide from them. They would rather be crushed and buried by the

mountains than to suffer the wrath of the returning Lamb.

Isaiah prophesied this frightful time eight hundred years before John's revelation. Notice the remarkable similarity in Isaiah's words as he described humanity "running scared" at the wrath of God. *And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.* Isaiah 2:19

John ends the sixth seal with a rhetorical question. *For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?* Who will be able to stand guiltless before the wrathful Lamb? None of the Antichrist's followers will. Jesus knows who deserves deliverance and who deserves punishment. Those who have followed Him will go to be with Him at the rapture. Those who have not will face the *wrath of the Lamb* when He comes to earth to conquer and to rule.

Here are five truths about the *wrath of the Lamb* at the close of the sixth seal. It may be necessary to read PART 5, Tribulation Fallacies, in order to fully understand them.

1. The *wrath of the Lamb* (Christ's return to earth) closes the 6th seal.
2. The *wrath of the lamb* is not part of the seven trumpets.
3. The *wrath of the Lamb* is not part of the vials of God's wrath.
4. The *wrath of the Lamb* is not part of the tribulation period.
5. The *wrath of the Lamb* comes **after** the tribulation period and **after** the wrath of God

SEAL 7

INTERLUDE - 1 *And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.* 2 *And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.* 3 *And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.* 4 *And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of*

The Tribulation

the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. 5 And the angel took the censer, and filled it with the fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake. 6 And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. Revelation 8:1-6

Silence fills heaven when the Lamb opens the last seal. For half an hour the sounds of heaven are stopped. This is the only instance where the Bible speaks of heaven being silent. Earth will not hear this silence. It will be filled with the thunder of natural forces, the noises of war and the cries of hurting humanity. Oh, if only they could hear the silence of heaven as the trumpets are prepared for them.

John watched as seven angels were handed seven trumpets. This was followed by a solemn prayer service. An eighth angel mixed the prayers of the saints on earth with sweet incense and offered them to God. Their prayers break heaven's silence. Then the golden censer is filled with fire from the altar and is cast to the earth. The seven angels prepare to blow their trumpets. Beware, earth!

Tribulation Trumpets

Pre-tribulationists invariably identify the seals, trumpets, and vials as God's judgment and wrath. False! False! False! That is an inexcusable twisting of The Revelation prophecy. It is untwisted in PART 5, Tribulation Fallacies.

The events of the seals came by personages on horseback indicating that mankind was the source of those conditions: wars, starvation, disease and death. The events of the trumpets, however, cannot be attributed to man. They come directly from God who intervenes with seven "wake-up" calls in the form of seven supernatural events called forth by seven trumpets.

The seven trumpets will sound nearer to the end of the tribulation period. The duration of the seals, trumpets and vials varies which is explained in PART 5, Tribulation Fallacies.

TRUMPET 1

FIRE FROM HEAVEN - *The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.* Revelation 8:7

There never was a storm like this before - a hail storm mixed with fire and blood. Neither has the earth seen damage like this before. *And the third part of trees was burnt up...* Think what that will do to the supply of wood and wood products. Housing construction, furniture making and paper making will be curtailed. Probably the first trumpet will bring an end to all wood construction and wood products.

Also, *all green grass was burnt up.* That would include all food grains, flowers, plants and herbs of the field. Imagine the effect this will have on the world's food supply. Food grown in the field will be lost. There will be no pasture land. No grass means no beef and other meats. This will contribute greatly to the hunger and starvation of the third seal.

The burning of the trees and grass will cause another grave shortage. Many drugs which are derived from trees, herbs, flowers and plants will not be available due to God's scorched earth policy. Pestilence (contagious diseases) will spread unchecked because of the lack of antibiotics and medicine. This will figure in the massive death toll of the fourth seal.

TRUMPET 2

FIRE FROM HEAVEN - 8 *And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; 9 And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.* Revelation 8:8-9

This burning mountain is likely a meteorite or some other hunk of burning space matter. It falls into the sea (singular). The Mediterranean Sea is the educated choice here. The Mediterranean Sea, called the Great Sea in early times, was the only sea known to the Jews for thousands of years. Also, the full length of Israel and much of the Antichrist's future kingdom is washed by the Mediterranean Sea.

The Tribulation

This fiery ball causes *the third part of the sea became blood*. That means that the sea will be one part blood and two parts water. It is possible that the blood comes from *the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died*. The alternative would be that the falling fiery object turns the water to appear as blood. This will drastically cut the supply of sea food adding to the world wide food shortage of the third seal.

The impact of the flaming mass destroys ships on the sea. *and the third part of the ships were destroyed*. Some ships will be destroyed by the wave action caused by the burning object plunging into the sea. Others will catch afire and burn. This loss of sea transportation will curtail the shipping of goods worldwide creating shortages of food and all necessities.

TRUMPET 3

FIRE FROM HEAVEN - *And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.*
Revelation 8:10-11

Another fiery form plummets from heaven called a *great star*. It cannot be a star like our sun because that would smash the earth into pieces. Apparently this fiery object disintegrates above the earth and pieces and particles fall into one third of the rivers and inland bodies of water. Think of a fireworks display. A single flare is shot into the sky and it suddenly explodes into multiple brilliant lights that fall to the earth.

This star is named Wormwood which means bitterness. Water into which it falls becomes bitter and people who drink it die. Bitterness does not always mean poison but in this case it does because it brought death to those who drank it. Water suitable for drinking will be more precious than gold in those days. Our world today there experiencing a growing shortage of good water for drinking and hygiene due to pollution.

TRUMPET 4

LIGHTS OUT - *And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.*
Revelation 8:12

The brightest light of the fourth trumpet is the exhibition of the awesome power of Creator God. By His limitless power He snuffs out the light from a third part of the sun, moon and the stars. In other words the light from the sun, moon and stars will be reduced by one third. The earth will experience days of lesser light. This will surely inflict emotional and psychological stress on the people. All living things will be affected by the fourth trumpet.

The darkness of the fourth trumpet was prophesied many times in the Old Testament. Here are a few.

For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. Isaiah 13:10

And when I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light. All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord God. Ezekiel 32:7-8

The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.
Joel 2:10

After reading the following prophecy by Zechariah's it appears that God will create undistinguishable days with the fourth trumpet. Here is How Zechariah described the light and darkness of those days.

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: But it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light.
Zechariah 14:6-7

The Tribulation

Imagine what that will do to the time schedules of the people. They will lose track of the time - is it morning, afternoon or evening? What day of the week or what day of the month is it? But God will know. His prophetic schedule will not miss a beat.

Several times the Bible tells of God immersing people in darkness as retribution for their evil ways. The first such incident was when God thrust Egypt into dense darkness for three days due to Pharaoh's stubbornness. He refused to let God's people go free to worship. (Exodus 10:21-23) The darkness of heart is like the darkness of night.

We are all familiar with the darkness at noon time when Jesus was crucified. Matthew related it: *Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.* Matthew 27:45 All of Israel was veiled in the black of darkness at midday from noon until three in the afternoon. That natural darkness was symbolic of the spiritual darkness that filled their hearts.

Did the Old Testament prophet Amos prophesy of Christ's crucifixion? He foretold, *And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day...* Amos 8:9 His prediction fits the day of Christ's crucifixion perfectly. God veiled the surrounding land in darkness at noon. God put the people of spiritual darkness in physical darkness for three hours while Jesus hung dying on the cross.

A future period of punitive darkness is written in the Revelation. There John wrote: *And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain...* Revelation 16:10

The *beast* in the foregoing verse is the Antichrist of the tribulation period and *seat* refers to his throne. God's wrath will come forth of the fifth vial as an oppressive darkness over the geographical region ruled by the Antichrist. We are not told the duration of this darkness but it predictably will continue until Christ returns and disposes of the Antichrist.

To summarize, the fourth trumpet appears to be a time of darkness for the earth and its inhabitants from that time forth. It will be neither light or dark but something in between - twilight perhaps. A discomfiting, even

frightful, time it will be.

TRUMPET 5

LOCUST SWARM - Revelation 9:1-12 The text of the fifth trumpet is lengthy and we will not copy it here. The reader may read it at his/her convenience. Below we itemize the major points of the fifth trumpet.

1. An angel descends from heaven and opens the bottomless pit releasing smoke which darkens the sky and the sun.
2. A huge swarm of demonic locusts emerge from this pit deep within the earth.
3. These locusts will not eat or destroy any green grass, plants or foliage as locusts normally do.
4. The locusts will sting only the people who have not received God's mark in their foreheads. (Revelation 7:3)
5. The locusts will inflict pain on the unsealed unbelievers for five months.
6. The sting of the locusts will be unbearably painful causing some to attempt suicide but they cannot.
7. These are not ordinary locusts because locusts do not sting like scorpions. Neither do natural locusts appear anything like these.

These weird locusts are demonic spirits from the underworld. They may be alive now in their subterranean pit waiting for the time of their release. The pit from which the locusts will come exists now. So, it is possible that it is teeming with these locusts awaiting the days of the fifth trumpet.

TRUMPET 6

DEMONIC ARMY - Revelation 9:13-21 Four angels are freed from constraint in the Euphrates River. They lead an army of 200 million underworld horsemen having weapons of fire, smoke and brimstone. They kill one third of the earth's population. This legion of 200 million is viewed by some to be the world's

The Tribulation

armies marching to Israel for the Battle of Armageddon. Others interpret this demonic warfare as nuclear war. Both proposals are wrong because:

1. This army is described as a plague in Revelation 9:20. Human warfare is not classified or defined as a plague. Like the locusts of the fifth trumpet their description is not that of humans. This is another demonic army.
2. This army emerges from the Euphrates River not from the nations.
3. Evil spirits (demons) call the armies of the world to Armageddon not fallen angels from the Euphrates River. (Revelation 16:13-14)
4. Christ destroys the human armies at the Battle of Armageddon. (Revelation 20) It is not told what happens to the 200 million demonic army.
5. The Battle of Armageddon (war) is the works of man. The trumpets are the supernatural intervention of God.

Not all the events of the trumpets are unprecedented. In fact, to a lesser degree, some of the events of the trumpets happened in Egypt 3500 years ago. God punished Egypt with ten plagues before Pharaoh allowed Moses to take Israel out of Egypt. They are recorded in Exodus 7-10.

John finished his tale of the sixth trumpet by noting the spiritual condition of the people after enduring the rigors of six trumpets. *Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.* Revelation 9:21 Sin can make sinners very hard in heart. Instead of coming to God in times of dire need or crushing pain or deep despair they stand defiant of Him. How sad that is.

TRUMPET 7

The **END** - *And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.* Revelation 11:15

In scripture the number seven signifies perfection or completion. The seventh trumpet heralds the completion of the tribulation period and the end

The Tribulation

of the Church Age. The seventh trumpet will not be discussed here because it is the subject of PART 4, Seventh Trumpet Rapture, in the ebook, The Church Rapture.

The Vials

Though the vials are part of John's Revelation they will not be discussed here for two reasons. First, contrary to popular prophecy the vials are NOT part of the tribulation period. They follow the tribulation period and finish Israel's 70th week. (Daniel 9:24-27) Secondly, the vials are discussed in PARTS 4 and 5 following.

PART 4



Tribulation To Wrath

Tribulation To Wrath

One of the most damaging prophecy snafus is the combining of tribulation and wrath. How often we hear the Revelation tribulation reported as a time of God's wrath and judgment. That cannot be. That is a prophetically tragic understanding. Tribulation is tribulation and wrath is wrath and **never to become one**.

With that disclaimer we know the reason for separating the vials from the seals and trumpets. The vials are specifically designated as God's wrath while the seals and trumpets are not. The seals and trumpets form the tribulation period which is followed by a time of God's wrath contained in seven vials. In PART 5, Tribulation's Fallacies, this is explained more fully.

In PARTS 1-3 we studied the tribulation period given us Daniel, Jesus and John. In none of their teachings of the tribulation period was it characterized as God's wrath. Nowhere in the Bible is it found that tribulation is God's wrath - nowhere. Neither can it be found that the church will be removed by the rapture before tribulation regardless of the time of tribulation.

God's wrath is described and confined to Revelation 15-18. This comes **after** the tribulation period which ends with the rapture of the church. The below outline shows the placement of God's wrath in Revelation prophecy. It may be helpful to copy it and keep it in your Bible.

Outline Of Revelation

- I Jesus prepares the church for tribulation - chapters 1-3
- II Heaven prepares for prophecy to unfold - chapters 4-5
- III The tribulation - chapters 6-14
- IV **God's wrath - chapters 15-18**
- V **The Lamb's wrath - chapter 19**
- VI The Millennial Kingdom - chapter 20
- VII The eternal state - chapters 21-22

The Tribulation

It is true that love is the core essence of God's character. The apostle John deeply sensed that truth and wrote, *God is love*. I John 4:16. In his gospel John explained that it was God's love that moved Him to send His Son to earth to redeem mankind from their sin. One is right to perceive God as a God of love.

At the same time we must not fail to recognize that the God of love has other attributes. It is impossible to alertly read the Bible and not realize that the God of love is also a God of wrath. What many fail to understand is that it is man's choice as to which God he comes to know - the loving God or the wrathful God. Each person by his/her attitude toward God makes Him either a God of love or a God of wrath.

There are several Old Testament accounts of God unleashing His wrath. To name a couple: God's drowning of the Egyptian army in the Red Sea (Exodus 14) and God's annihilation of Sodom and Gomorrah for their sins. (Genesis 19) The wrath of God is mentioned no less than twenty five times in the New Testament.

It is foolhardy to dismiss the "God of wrath." The New Testament covenant was practically introduced with a warning of God's wrath. John the Baptist preached in the wilderness of Judaea and baptized people in the Jordan River. A group of unbelieving Jews came to investigate his baptizing. He greeted them with this rebuke. *O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?* Matthew 3:7

Surely John's *wrath to come* is the wrath of God. He did not date God's wrath but knew of its coming. John the Baptist asked the unbelieving Jews, *who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?* God's wrath is coming, believe it. That leads to the question: Who will experience the wrath of God? These people will.

God's enemies - *...The Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies.* Nahum 1:2

Unbelievers - *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.* John 3:36

The Tribulation

Disobedient - *Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.* Ephesians 5:6

The world is filled with enemies of God. The world is filled people who do not believe God. The world is filled with those disobedient to God. They all will be subject to God's wrath in the day of His wrath. How pitiful and all because they will not come to God.

The Vials Of Wrath

When will God's wrath come? The pre-tribulationists are right in one respect. God's wrath will not come until after the church is raptured or taken to be with Jesus Christ. Their egregious error is in making the tribulation period God's wrath. That would demand a pre-tribulation rapture.

It is widely accepted that the oft-named tribulation period is seven years long. That is because the tribulation period is part of the 70th week (last 7 years) of Israel's seventy weeks. (Daniel 9:24-27) The problem is that it is not recognized that the 70th week in Revelation prophecy consists of a tribulation period plus a period of God's wrath. To make the whole of the final seven years God's wrath is serious prophetic fallacy.

When will God's wrath come? It comes after the blowing of the 7th trumpet. (Revelation 11:15) The 7th trumpet hails the end of the tribulation period (Revelation 6-14) and calls forth God's wrath (Rev 15-18). The problem is when is the 7th trumpet blown? It is indeterminable at what point in the last seven years the 7th trumpet sounds. Undoubtedly it will be near the end of the seven years because God's wrath will be of short duration, probably a few days or weeks.

It bears repeating: Tribulation is not wrath. There is no hope of salvation in wrath but there is with tribulation. Only the seven vials are identified as being God's wrath. (Revelation 15:1, 16:1) The church will be in heaven when God's wrath rains upon the earth. John saw the raptured church in heaven when the time came for God's wrath upon the unbelieving world.

The Tribulation

And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. Revelation 15:2

John sees Christians who gained victory over the Antichrist stand on a crystal sea of glass mixed with fire. This glass sea was seen earlier without fire and empty of people. (Revelation 4:6) That is because the tribulation period had not begun and the church was on earth. The tribulation period has now ended, the rapture has taken place and the Christians are gathered on this *sea of glass mingled with fire*. This is memorial to the victorious Christians who went through the fires of tribulation.

One very joyful benefit of the rapture is that Christians escape the wrath of God. The prophet Zephaniah could not have had the rapture in mind when he wrote the following but he did speak of escaping God's wrath. *Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: **it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger.*** Zephaniah 2:3 (emphasis mine)

The seven vials are filled with the Lord's anger - God's wrath. Seven angels pour the seven vials of wrath upon the earth one after the other. Where is the church? It is safely hid in heaven with Jesus Christ and God the Father. That is cause for all Christians to shout with joy even now!

It seemed unnecessary to copy the text of the seven vials here but we will identify and comment on each of them. It will be helpful to have your Bible opened to Revelation Chapter 16 for instant reference as we discuss them.

Before looking at the vials this clarification is offered. It is thought by some that the vials are mostly confined to the kingdom of the Antichrist, the revived Roman Empire, the last world government. That appears to conflict with what John wrote. *And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.* Revelation 16:1

The seven angels were instructed to pour their vials of God's wrath *upon the earth*. That would seem to include more than just the area of the Antichrist's European kingdom. Unbelievers who worship the Antichrist and

take his mark will be everywhere in the world. Accordingly, all the earth and its inhabitants will have the vials of God's wrath dumped on them.

VIAL 1

Revelation 16:2 BOILS - People who took the mark of the Beast (Antichrist) and worshipped his image were left behind at the rapture. They become infected with burning boils all over their body. No ointment will soothe them and no medicine will heal them. In verse 11 they are seen cursing God because of their pains and sores.

The first vial is reminiscent of the plague that God put on Egypt when Moses tried to persuade Pharaoh to let Israel go into the wilderness to worship God. All Egyptians and their animals were covered with festering sores. (Exodus 9:8-11)

VIAL 2

Revelation 16:3 SEA OF BLOOD - The second vial was poured upon the *sea*. Though the word *sea* is singular it infers all seas in contrast to land. The pretty blue-green water of all seas will be turned to a repulsive blood red. All marine life dies. No more sea food dinners. The beaches will be covered with dead marine life. Imagine the stench! No more beach parties.

The second vial is a worse version of the second trumpet. (Revelation 8:8-9) Then only one third of the oceans became blood and one third of sea life died. Those who experienced the second trumpet never dreamed of the second vial.

VIAL 3

Revelation 16:4-7 - BLOOD TO DRINK All rivers and bodies of fresh water on the planet will be turned to blood. This will leave no fresh drinking water for man or beast. Imagine an earth seventy five percent blood rather than water.

Why would God do this? Verse 6 tells us. God gives them blood to drink because they shed the blood of His saints and prophets.

VIAL 4

Revelation 16:8-9 SUMMER SIZZLE - God will turn up the sun's thermostat and the earth will become like an oven. There will be no cool dip in the ocean or lake because they will be as overheated swimming pools. The excessive heat will be unbearable and inescapable. The Bible says they are *scorched with great heat*. Air conditioners and ice machines will be in great demand.

One might think that the Old Testament prophet Malachi knew of the fourth vial when he prophesied, *For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.* Malachi 4:1

We all know that periods of excessive heat can affect man, beast and creation. Heat related deaths usually occur in a heat wave. Elderly, young and ill folk often die from prolonged high heat. No doubt the elevated heat of the fourth vial will cause untold deaths beyond any heat wave before it.

The withering heat of the fourth vial will have another predictable affect on the people. Uncommon heat tends to agitate people making them uncomfortable and testy. John recorded the irritability and anger of the people suffering from the heat. He wrote,

And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory. Revelation 16:9 The people were angry with God and called Him names. Even worse they spited themselves by refusing to repent of their sins.

VIAL 5

Revelation 16:10-11 DARKNESS - God plunges the *kingdom* of the Antichrist into dense darkness. Some prophecy expositors think this darkness affects only the Antichrist's European territory.

Others see the Antichrist's *kingdom* as the whole world thereby putting all the earth in total darkness. Whichever view is correct matters not to the church because it will not be here.

Imagine living in one long dark night lasting maybe for weeks or months. It is not given how long the darkness of the fifth vial lasts but it doubtless will be longer than that which Moses brought upon Egypt. (Exodus 10:21-23) All of Egypt was cast into a thick darkness for three days allowing no moving about. Egypt's plague of darkness is typical of the darkness coming upon the Antichrist and his kingdom.

VIAL 6

Revelation 16:12-16 CALL TO BATTLE - The Battle of Armageddon, as we learned earlier, is the wrath of the Lamb, Jesus Christ. With the sixth vial God calls all the armies of the world to Israel for battle. Two notable events occur, one natural and one spiritual, which precipitate the last war.

Natural event. The Euphrates River becomes a dry riverbed. We are not told how this happens but we know that it will be a miraculous act of God. More mysterious than the drying up of the river is the reason for it. John gave the reason as, *that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared*. God dries up the Euphrates River preparatory for the Battle of Armageddon.

But why? Rivers are no problem for movement of today's armies. We can fly over mountains and oceans to land a fully equipped army any place on the planet. Why must the Euphrates River be dry? Here are two possibilities. The first is that the armies will be mounted on horses. In John's account of the Battle of Armageddon the horse is the mode of transportation. (Revelation 19:18)

If John's war story is to be taken literally then the horses are real animals and the armies are actually cavalries. God makes the river easily fordable by drying it up as He did the Red Sea for the fleeing Israelites from Egypt. Another reason for considering the armies to be traveling on horses is this. John told of the birds eating the carcasses of men and horses after the Battle of Armageddon. (Revelation 19) Birds cannot eat military weaponry and armored vehicles.

The Tribulation

There may be a second reason for God drying up the Euphrates River beside assisting the armies to invade Israel. After the decisive Battle of Armageddon Christ will set up His Millennial Kingdom and all Jews will return to Israel. An empty Euphrates River would facilitate the Jews' trek back to their homeland. That seems to be the prophecy of Isaiah in the following passage.

And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dryshod. And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt. Isaiah 11:15-16

Isaiah envisioned a time when God will gather His people from Assyria and the East. If this is the gathering of Israel after the Battle of Armageddon then the Euphrates River will be in the path of millions of migrating Jews to Israel. Isaiah wrote that God will *shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dryshod.*

The term *dryshod* speaks of the wearing of shoes or sandals. The Israelites will be able to cross the river in their daily footwear, shoes and sandals. So, it very well could be that God will dry up the Euphrates River to allow the passage of the armies headed for the Battle of Armageddon and afterward the returning Jews to their homeland.

SPIRITUAL EVENT - Evil spirits (demons) sway ungodly leaders to war. John saw three unclean spirits come out of the dragon (Satan), the beast (Antichrist) and the false prophet. This evil trio is known as the "unholy trinity." These unclean spirits will persuade all kings (governments) to march against Israel. All through human history evil spirits have urged ungodly men to wage unjust wars.

In final analysis the Battle of Armageddon is not the work of Satan, the Antichrist, the false prophet or the ungodly world rulers. As John watches the armies of the world muster in Israel he writes, *And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.* Revelation 16:16 God Himself will orchestrate this final showdown.

The Tribulation

God has always been in charge. He forms nations, He destroys nations. He sets up kings, He deposes kings. He starts wars, He ends wars. God rules in the affairs of men. The Old Testament prophet Daniel expressed that truth. *...he removeth kings, he setteth up kings...* Dan 2:21 *...the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.* Daniel 4:17

Another Old Testament prophet, Zechariah, prophesied of God's leading at the Battle of Armageddon. *For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.* Zechariah 14:2

God Himself will call *all nations* and America will be among them. The Battle of Armageddon will be the world's last licks at Israel. The Jews will suffer greatly but they will be saved by their Messiah, Jesus Christ. All kingdoms of this world will be brought low but Israel will be raised up. Pray for Israel!

VIAL 7

Revelation 16:17-21 - IT IS DONE Twice in Revelation we see the expression, *It is done*. Here with the seventh vile it is a negative expression because it is speaking of judgment. In Revelation 21:6 it is a positive expression because it announces the presence of God's new Jerusalem. It is there where Christians will spend eternity with God and Jesus Christ. What a grand expectation!

The seventh vial releases the last of God's basting of planet earth and its ungodly inhabitants. We briefly jot elements of that wrathful finale.

- * A booming voice from God's throne cries, *It is done*. Final destruction is about to fall upon this ungodly world.
- * A mighty earthquake splits Jerusalem into three sections and cities around the world become mounds of rubble.
- * Islands sink into the sea and mountains crumble.

The Tribulation

* Hail stones weighing 75-100 pounds pelt the planet and the people.

God will demolish the world that man had built . The landscape will look like it had been hit by nuclear bombs. What few humanity is left will be in a terrible state physically, psychologically and emotionally. It is time for Jesus Christ to return and exert His control over Satan, the Antichrist, the False Prophet and the remaining lost humanity.

The seventh vile brings down the end time Babylon. It's destruction had been announced earlier by an angel flying through heaven crying, *Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city*. Revelation 14:8 It is unclear as to whether *Babylon...that great city* refers to a city in the Antichrist's kingdom resembling ancient Babylon or whether it speaks of a rebuilt Babylon in the Antichrist's kingdom. Then again it may refer to a world that reflects the Babylon of old.

Babylon is pictured as a religious whore with a name on her forehead which reads, *MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH*. Revelation 17:5 Revelation 17 tells of the destruction of the Babylonian religious system which overcame the whole world. As you read this book the majority of the people are already entrapped by false religions.

Another shameful condition is attributed to end time Babylon beside false religion. In Revelation 18 we read, *For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies*. Revelation 18:3 Materialism will pervade the end time culture.

The Babylon of the tribulation period will be ruled by two natures. First nature: *For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her...* The nations and their leaders have fully embraced Babylon's false religion. The religious atmosphere of our world today makes it ready to accept the Antichrist and the False Prophet.

The second nature of Babylon will be, *...and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies*. End time Babylon will be a materialistic society. Materialism goes hand- in-hand with false

The Tribulation

religion because without God the things of this world become their attraction. End time Babylon, under the control of the Antichrist, will control all commerce and trade of the world's goods.

When God destroys the Babylon of false religion her followers will grieve for the loss of their religious headquarters. John wrote, *And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning.* Revelation 18:9

Materialistic Babylon will end simultaneously with the destruction of religious Babylon. John heard the merchants of the earth lamenting the loss of Babylon and her treasures. *And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.* Revelation 18:19

Our world is fast adopting the religious/materialistic cultures of the tribulation Babylon. What perceptive person would argue that this world is becoming enamored with false religion and consumerism? The Antichrist will not bring about the false religious/materialistic culture of the tribulation period. It is blossoming now and will be in full bloom when he arrives on the scene.

After the seven vials of God wrath (Revelation 15-18) Jesus Christ and the church return to earth in Revelation 19. Jesus slays the armies of the world at the Battle of Armageddon and establishes His Millennial Kingdom in Revelation 20. Christ and the church will rule on earth for one thousand years. (Revelation 20:6) Halleluiah!

The Three Wraths

The wrath of God is a solid Biblical doctrine but it is a silent doctrine in far too many churches. As a result both Christians and lost souls show a casual concern about the coming wrath of God. Christians need a greater awareness of it for reaching out to the lost. The lost need to hear of God's wrath in order to escape it. Actually wrath will come from three beings in the Revelation tribulation. They are:

SATAN'S WRATH - In the middle of the tribulation period Satan and his

The Tribulation

angelic band are cast out of heaven by the archangel Michael and his host. John wrote, ...*Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath...* Revelation 12:12

All humanity will be affected by Satan's wrath but the brunt of his wrath will be aimed at God's people, the Jews and Christians. He will do this through the evil works of the Antichrist, false prophet and ungodly rulers.

GOD'S WRATH - God's wrath in The Revelation prophecy has been wrongly identified and misplaced in much of today's prophecy preaching. It is prophetic truth that only the vials are God's wrath. (Revelation 15:1, 16:1) Here are some associated truths of God's wrath.

1. Tribulation and wrath are not the same neither in nature nor time.
2. The seals and trumpets are nowhere described as God's wrath.
3. God's wrath does not appear in Revelation before Revelation 15:1. Placing God's wrath before Revelation 15 is incorrect prophecy.
4. God's wrath (the vials) comes after the tribulation (seals and trumpets).

We do not say that God's wrath is not mentioned before Revelation 15:1. In the seventh trumpet we read, *And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come...* Revelation 11:18 BUT God's wrath does not come in Revelation 11:18. The words *and thy wrath is come* are a form of speech called prolepsis which means that it is a statement of anticipation or expectation. God's wrath comes with the vials in Revelation 16 and no sooner.

The LAMB'S WRATH - The one mention of this is in the sixth trumpet. ...*Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.* Revelation 6:16

This is not the wrath of God. The *Lamb* is Jesus Christ. When He comes back to earth He will exhibit divine wrath at the Battle of Armageddon. He will destroy the armies of the world that have gathered in Israel against the Jews and their God. (Revelation 20)

The Tribulation

IMPORTANT. The trumpets and vials must take place within the time frame of the seals for these reasons:

1. The sixth seal brings the END because it extends to the time of the wrath of the Lamb.
2. The wrath of the Lamb is the Battle of Armageddon at Christ's return to earth following the tribulation period.
3. The Millennial Kingdom, Christ's earthly reign, follows the Battle of Armageddon.
4. If the sixth seal extends to the Battle of Armageddon then the trumpets and vials must occur during the time frame of the seals.

There is another recurring clue which indicates that the seals, trumpets and vials do not occur in a purely consecutive manner, one after another. That clue is earthquakes.

Sixth seal - *And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood.*
Revelation 6:12

Seventh trumpet - *And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.* Revelation 11:19

Seventh vial - *And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.*
Revelation 16:18

Earthquakes of unequalled magnitude close the seals, trumpets and vials. The common view is that these are three separate earthquakes. It has been proposed that these three earthquakes are really **one**. If that be true then the seals, trumpets and vials all end with the same earthquake. They all end at the same point in time. This author agrees.

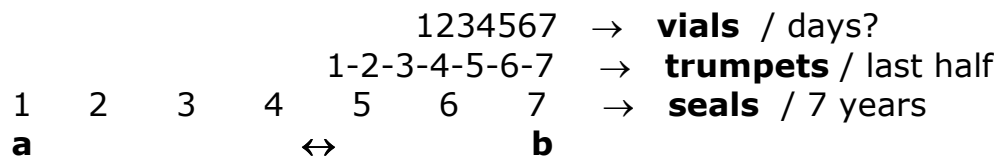
The Tribulation

Though the seals, trumpets and vials have a common ending they do not have a common starting point. The events of the seals begin first, later the trumpets and still later the vials. They unfold in a "staggered" and "stacked" manner. They start at different times (staggered) with compounding action (stacked).

The seals come first and will continue through the whole of the last seven years. The trumpets, God's fiery trials, come near the end of the tribulation period. The people now feel the effects of the seals and trumpets. The vials, God's wrath, succeeds the tribulation period. The people now are reeling from the compounded affects of the seals, trumpets and vials.

It is true that Revelation presents the seven seals first, then the seven trumpets, then the seven vials. That is because the events of the seals fall first then the events of the trumpets and lastly the events of the vials. Though they start at different times they end at the same time. They all will take place within a seven year time span (Daniel's 70th week) which ends with the return of Jesus Christ.

The following graph shows the "staggering" and "stacking" methods of the seals, trumpets and vials.



a ↔ b Last 7 years includes the seals, trumpets and vials.
Last 7 years include the tribulation period (seals and trumpets) and God's wrath (the vials).

a Antichrist signs peace pact with Israel. The last 7 years begin.

b Jesus Christ returns to earth ending the last 7 years.

The following statements give understanding to the foregoing diagram of the seals, trumpets and vials. They may not be fully understood until one reads our companion e-book, The Church Rapture.

1. The seals extend through the last seven years which are popularly known as the tribulation period. To be accurate, the last seven

The Tribulation

years contain the tribulation period and the wrath of God.

Remember, tribulation and wrath are not the same.

Remember, the church is destined to suffer tribulation.

Remember, wrath is intended for the ungodly.

2. Seal 6 has the terminal earthquake to the last seven years. Jesus Christ will then come to earth to conquer and to rule for a thousand years.
3. The trumpets come on top of (in addition to) the seals. It is not known when they begin. The seventh trumpet marks the end of the tribulation period and the start of God's wrath.
4. Trumpet 7 brings the rapture of the church before the wrath of God is poured from the seven vials.
5. The vials come on top of the seals and trumpets. The vials are of the shortest duration lasting probably only a few days or weeks at the end of the last seven years.
6. The seals, trumpets and vials have different starting points but share a common ending. All three are punctuated with an earth-shaking earthquake which some believe to be the same quake.

It is an accepted historical fact that the church has undergone serious tribulation in times past. Are we to believe that their tribulation was God's wrath? Of course not! It is a fact too that the church is presently undergoing increasing tribulation in various areas of the world **today**. Are we to believe that their tribulation is God's wrath? Of course not!

Then how is it that so many prophecy minded Christians want to make the tribulation period of Revelation a time of God's wrath? God did not. Jesus did not. His prophetic Word does not.

There is a definite change from tribulation to wrath both in time and purpose.

PART 5

Tribulation Fallacies

Tribulation Fallacies

A fallacy is a falsehood or deception. Certainly there are no fallacies in the Biblical doctrine of the end time tribulation. There are however many fallacies in the tribulation which is being taught in much of Christendom. We hasten to concede that often it is done by sincere and godly preachers who simply misinterpret or misunderstand tribulation prophecy. Even so, it is a very serious matter because these tribulation fallacies present a false future for Christians.

Here are some serious tribulation fallacies that will be put aright in this chapter.

- 1 The tribulation period is a time of God's wrath and judgment.
- 2 The seals, trumpets and vials are all God's wrath.
- 3 The seals, trumpets and vials unfold in a consecutive manner
- 4 The tribulation and the Day of the Lord are the same
- 5 The Day of Christ and the Day of the Lord are the same.

We open this study of "Tribulation Fallacies" with a simple outline of Revelation. The sections pertaining to tribulation fallacies are in bold print.

I	Jesus speaks to His church	chapters 1-3
II	God and the Lamb are praised	chapters 4-5
III	The tribulation period	chapters 6-14
IV	God's wrath	chapters 15-18
V	The Lamb's wrath	chapter 19
VI	The Millennial Kingdom	chapter 20
VII	The eternal state	chapters 21-22

Tribulation And Wrath

Christians sometimes resist Biblical and prophetic truth because they are comfortable with what they believe. Many will not accept the following truth because they have been taught differently and that is what they want to believe. Nevertheless, truth will prevail and the truth is that the tribulation period:

- * is NOT the Day of the Lord
- * is NOT the time of God's wrath
- * is NOT the Day of God's vengeance
- * is NOT God's judgment of this world

It is true that God's wrath is not intended for the church. The following references testify to that truth.

I Thessalonians 1:10 *And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.*

I Thessalonians 5:9 *For God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Romans 5:9 *Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.*

The following verses identify the recipients of God's wrath.

Ezra 8:22 *The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him.*

Nahum 1:2 *God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth; the Lord revengeth, and is furious; the Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies.*

John 3:36 *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

Ephesians 5:6 *Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.*

The Tribulation

God's wrath is intended for His enemies, the unbelievers, not the church. The problem is that many see the tribulation of Revelation as God's wrath. This is perhaps the most damnable of the tribulation fallacies commonly preached.

Contrary to popular belief the tribulation period is **not** God's wrath. We know that the church WILL suffer tribulation. Therefore, tribulation and wrath cannot be the same. If tribulation were God's wrath then the church has been suffering His wrath from its inception. Today Churches around the world are suffering stiff tribulation but tribulation but NOT God's wrath.

Many prophecy preachers, this author included, view the Lord's prophecy as foretelling the tribulation period of The Revelation. Our readers are challenged to read that passage and take note of how many times you see the word "wrath." Not once did Jesus mention wrath in His description of the coming tribulation period. Yet it is continually preached as a time of God's wrath. Tribulation, yes. Wrath, no.

An explanation is now offered for those who know that in Luke's account of the tribulation period Jesus spoke of *wrath upon this people* meaning the Jews. Luke 21:23 They truly will experience hot wrath in the tribulation period but it is not God's wrath. It is the wrath of Satan upon Israel (Revelation 12:12) administered through the Antichrist, the false prophet and their ungodly leaders.

The Lord's tribulation prophecy (Matthew 24) is seen by "futuristic" prophecy preachers as being fulfilled in the seals of Revelation. They also pronounce the seals to be God's wrath. That is a monstrous fallacy. The truth is that the wrath of God is not mentioned in the Lord's tribulation prophecy or in the seals of The Revelation. Why? Because the tribulation period is NOT the wrath of God.

An incident occurs just prior to the breaking of the first seal which renders impossible the idea that the seals are God's wrath. John wrote, *And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.* Revelation 5:8

The Lamb (Jesus Christ) takes the book of "future things" from God the Father. Then the four living creatures and the twenty four elders fall

The Tribulation

prostrate in worship before the Lamb. They hold golden bowls *full of odours, which are the prayers of saints* who are on earth as the tribulation begins. Therefore, the seals cannot be God's wrath because saints (Christians) will not suffer God's wrath. Christians will have tribulation and that is what the seals are, tribulation.

The Wrath Of The Sixth Seal

Only the *wrath of the Lamb* is mentioned in the seals. Revelation 6:16-17) The wrath of the Lamb differs from the wrath of God. The wrath of the Lamb refers to the Battle of Armageddon which occurs when Jesus Christ returns to earth. (Revelation 19) The Battle of Armageddon is fought **after** the tribulation period and **after** the wrath of God.

Thus, the wrath of the Lamb is **not** the wrath of God and it does not come in the tribulation period. We must remember that tribulation and wrath are two different things and occur at different times. The church is destined to suffer tribulation, even the Revelation tribulation, but God's wrath is for the ungodly.

One cannot alertly read the Bible without learning of God's wrath. It is named and described many times in the Old Testament. The first person to preach of God's impending wrath in the New Testament was John the Baptist. He asked some unbelieving Jews who came to contest his baptism this question. *...who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?* Matthew 3:7 God's wrath is coming and we can flee from it only by fleeing to Him.

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE WRATH OF GOD

It is a gross prophetic blunder to call the tribulation period God's wrath. If the tribulation period is to be properly understood we must grasp these truths. First, tribulation and wrath are not the same. If tribulation is God's wrath then the church has suffered His wrath for two millennia. The church will suffer tribulation until Christ returns to take possession of it **after** the tribulation period.

Second truth - God's wrath comes only with the vials. It is made ready in Revelation 15 and is executed in Revelation 16. God's wrath is noted three times earlier in Revelation but only in anticipation not in execution.

The Tribulation

Only in Revelation 15-18 does God's wrath fall upon the world **after** the tribulation period. God's wrath cannot be part of the tribulation period because the church will be present.

Third truth - This will surprise many readers so read carefully. The wrath of God has not yet come when people accept the mark of the beast. (Revelation 13:16) This really helps in setting forth the time of God's wrath. This will unsettle some readers but it is prophetic truth which shines brightly in the following passage.

And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb. Revelation 14:9-10

Please note that the wrath of God is promised to those who worship the beast - the Antichrist. They are told *the same shall drink (future) of the wine of the wrath of God*. That means that the wrath of God has not yet appeared when the people are deceived and coerced into taking the beast's mark. They will experience God's wrath when the seven vials are poured out. (Revelation 16) This clinches the truth that **the tribulation is not God's wrath**.

Revelation 14 is the last chapter of the tribulation period. It gives conclusive evidence that God's wrath does not come before the vials in Revelation 15. Three angels soar through heaven each having a message for those on earth.

Third angel (Revelation 14:9-11) Warned the people on earth that those who worship the beast and accept his mark *shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God...* This clearly shows that the mark of the beast is not in the time of God's wrath but is in the tribulation period. Only the seven vials bring God's wrath.

Second angel (Revelation 14:8) Announced to the inhabitants of the earth *Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city...* Remember, the angel's cry is heard in the tribulation period and is one of anticipation not execution. Babylon does not fall until the

The Tribulation

seventh vial of God's wrath. (Revelation 16-18)

First angel (Revelation 14:6-7) Preached the *everlasting gospel* to those dwelling on earth and warned them to fear God and give Him the glory because *judgment is come* (is coming). The angel's cry of judgment comes forth in the tribulation period but it does not occur until the vials of God's wrath. (Revelation 16-18)

The first angel's message proves that the tribulation period is not God's wrath. He preached the *everlasting gospel*. It has been postulated that the *everlasting gospel* is not that of the church. Is there another *everlasting gospel* other than that of Jesus Christ? The first angel could not have preached the *everlasting gospel* if God's wrath was in force because the option of salvation would be past.

Israel suffered much tribulation which has also been perceived by some as God's wrath. Moses wrote of Israel's tribulation.

And the Lord shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the Lord shall lead you. and When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, If thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice; (For the Lord thy God is a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them. Deuteronomy 4:27, 30-31

In tribulation Israel had the opportunity to turn to their God and be obedient to Him. If they did that God promised not to (1) forsake them (2) destroy them or (3) forget the covenant. God intended for tribulation to motivate Israel to repent, to return to God and to render obedience to Him. Tribulation serves a similar purpose in this Church Age. Backslidden and disobedient Christians should return to God while the lost people ought to come to God.

It is clearly discernable in Revelation that tribulation and wrath differ greatly in respect to salvation. John saw a huge crowd in heaven. *After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon*

The Tribulation

the throne, and unto the Lamb. Revelation 7:9-10

One of the twenty four elders asked John who these people were and where they came from. John did not know so the elder told him. *These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.* Revelation 7:14

According to the elder the mass of people which John saw had come to heaven out of **great tribulation** on earth. Jesus placed **great tribulation** in the second half of the tribulation period. Matthew 24:21 John was told that this *great multitude had washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.* This is a **saved** multitude - washed in the blood of Jesus Christ. They went to heaven from the **great tribulation** and now stand before the Lamb, their Savior.

With God's wrath it will be much different. In Revelation 15-18 we see God's wrath upon this earth and its dwellers. In the prelude to God's wrath we see a congregation of Christians standing before God in heaven. (Revelation 15:2) This is the raptured church. All those who worshipped the beast (Antichrist) and took his mark remain on earth.

Seven angels pour seven vials of God's wrath on the earth in Revelation 16 which unleashes unmatched death and destruction. Revelation 17-18 focus on God's wrath upon end-time Babylon where the world's false religious and materialistic systems are centered. It is a good assumption that the Antichrist's throne will be there also.

Let us now locate Babylon of the tribulation period. Five times in Revelation 18 Babylon is spoken of as that **great city**. In Revelation 17 John gave this description of end time Babylon. *The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.* Revelation 17:9, 18

John situated Babylon on seven mountains. It is well known that Rome is a city setting on seven hills. Even more definitive is the fact that Rome is the city *which reigneth over the kings of the earth* in John's time. Whereas a revived Roman Empire will rule the world in the tribulation period it seems reasonable that Rome would be end time Babylon. Some prophecy zealots disagree with this prophetic projection.

The Tribulation

This is the truth we must grasp about God's wrath in Revelation 15-18. There is no mention of people being saved or coming out of God's wrath and going to heaven. Those who survive the time of God's wrath which follows the tribulation period will go into the Millennial Kingdom. They then will be ruled by Jesus Christ and the church which comes back with Him. The church rules! Thank you, Jesus!

Tribulation, including the tribulation of Revelation, is **not** God's wrath. The church will suffer tribulation but not God's wrath. God's wrath comes **after** the tribulation. It is an inexcusable fallacy to include God's wrath in the tribulation period.

Tribulation And Judgment

This is another huge fallacy clouding the tribulation period. The events of the tribulation period are perceived by many prophecy preachers to be God's judgment. It has been shown that the seals are not God's wrath. Now we will see that neither are they God's judgments.

Only once in the seven seals is any form of the word "judge" used. *And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?* Revelation 6:9-10

John saw the souls of martyred Christians resting under the altar before God's throne. They inquired of God when He would *judge* their killers. Their judgment will come but not in the time of the fifth seal. The martyrs were told they *should rest for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.* Revelation 6:11

The martyrs were informed that their murderers would not be judged until their fellow Christians on earth were killed as they had been. The murdering of Christians will continue until Christ ends the tribulation period with the rapture of the church. That means that God's judgment does not come during the time of the seals - the tribulation period.

The Tribulation

If the seals are not God's judgment when does it come? Follow this closely. Before the vials of God's wrath (Revelation 15-18) there are just three occasions where "judgment" is named in any form. As we read them we must understand that judgment is mentioned in anticipation NOT in execution.

Revelation 6:10 *And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?* This is the fifth seal of the tribulation period. Tribulation is not a time of judgment so any judging must come later with God's wrath.

Revelation 11:18 *And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged...* Two comments are needful here. First, the *dead* are all unbelievers both dead and alive at the return of Jesus Christ. Second, this judgment is the rapture when the *dead* will be rejected and left on earth for the wrath of God.

Revelation 14:7 *...Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.* Three angels wing through heaven shouting warnings. The first angel commands the people to *Fear God...for the hour of his judgment is come...*

IMPORTANT. The angel's words *for the hour of his judgment is come* is in the proleptic form. Prolepsis speaks of something that is to happen as already happening. So, the angel's warning, *for the hour of his judgment is come*, does not mean that judgment is happening. It is a statement of anticipation.

If God's judgment was in force when the angel proclaimed, *for the hour of his judgment is come*, the everlasting gospel would not have preached to the world. Unbelievers are not saved in God's judgment. How many souls were saved after judgment fell on Sodom and Gomorrah? How many people were saved during the water judgment in Noah's time? How many souls will be saved when His judgment falls at the end of this world? None. Zero.

The Tribulation

We have seen that people have the chance to get right with God and be saved during the time of the seals - during the tribulation. Therefore tribulation cannot be God's judgment. If judgment does not come during the tribulation seals when does it come? Revelation 15:4 and 19:2 tell us.

Revelation 15:4 *Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.*

John sees seven angels holding God's wrath in seven bowls. He also saw a throng of victorious Christians from the tribulation period standing on a glassy sea before God's throne. They sang the songs of Moses and the Lamb which included this verse.

Notice the words of their song, *for thy judgments are made manifest*. It is now time for God's *judgments* to happen - to be known. The people on earth will feel God's *judgments* when the seven bowls of His wrath are emptied upon the earth. This is confirmed in the next verse.

Revelation 19:2 *For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.*

The raptured Christians are gathered in heaven and they sing praises to the Lord God. In their praise they acknowledge that *true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore...* Notice the words *judgments* and *judged*.

When did God *judge* Babylon? He *judged* her in His wrath of the seventh vial which is detailed in Revelation 17-18. *Judgments* are the outcome of God's wrath not tribulation. Let us hear what the angel broadcasts after tipping the third vial of God's wrath. *Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou has judged thus.* Revelation 16:5

When the third vial of wrath is emptied it is precisely stated that God has *judged*. This supports the truth that *judgment* comes with God's wrath not with tribulation. Remember, tribulation is God's testing but God's wrath brings *judgments*. Not the seals, not the trumpets but the vials only are

The Tribulation

clearly designated as God's *judgments*.

Not once in His tribulation prophecy did Jesus characterize it as God's wrath or judgment. Not once are the seals and trumpets described as wrath or judgment because they make up the tribulation period. Only the vials are God's wrath and judgment and they come after the tribulation period. We repeat: Tribulation and wrath are not the same. They therefore must be separated in time.

Time Span Of The Seals

The time span (duration) of the seals has been badly miscalculated. This has produced an inaccurate time relationship between the seals, trumpets and vials. In order to get the true time relationship of the three we must know the correct time span of the seals. This is very important prophetically.

The time span of the seals is the most important of the three. The seals occupy the time from the appearance of the antichrist (Revelation 6:1) to the Lamb's wrath (Revelation 6:16). The wrath of the Lamb falls at the Battle of Armageddon which comes **after** the tribulation and **after** God's wrath. Therefore, the time of the seals extend from the beginning of the tribulation (Revelation 6:1) to Christ's return to earth at the Battle of Armageddon. (Revelation 19)

That means that the rapture, though not actually shown, must occur somewhere in the six seals. The rapture is pictured elsewhere in Revelation but it happens in the time of the seals. Finding it is our next task.

Tribulation's End

The tribulation period ends with the rapture of the church. That requires the rapture at some point in the seals because the sixth seal brings the wrath of the Lamb. The wrath of the Lamb comes after the tribulation period and after the wrath of God. What we have to do is insert the rapture in the correct place in the seals. To do that we will first read Jesus' description of the rapture.

The Tribulation

Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Matthew 24:29-30

Jesus said that **after** the tribulation ...*the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken.* The action described in His statement is very similar to that of the sixth seal.

And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. Revelation 6:12-13

These two descriptions agree in time and action which, according to Jesus, signal His appearing at the rapture. If that be true then we can properly place the rapture between verses 13 and 14 of the sixth seal. The wrath of God begins with verse 14 which is evidenced by the seventh vial in Revelation 16:17-21.

Many preachers see Revelation 6:12-13 as God's wrath which falls in the Day of the Lord. That cannot be. If Revelation 6:12-13 are the Day of the Lord then Matthew 24:29 must be the Day of the Lord also. We know that is not true because Jesus followed that with His appearing at the rapture. The rapture precedes not succeeds the Day of the Lord. Thus, Revelation 6:12-13 falls in the tribulation period just before the rapture and NOT in the Day of the Lord.

Peter too rendered false the notion that Revelation 6:12-13 is the Day of The Lord when he quoted Joel's prophecy of the last days. *The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come; And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.* Acts 2:20-21 Joel 2:31-32

Joel's description of the last days compares with that of John's sixth seal. Joel declared that these events take place **before** *that great and notable day*

The Tribulation

of the Lord come. Therefore, we can conclude that the darkened sun and bloody moon of the sixth seal occurs **before** the Day of the Lord - **before** the wrath of God.

In his prophecy Joel made a remarkable promise which gives further proof that he was talking about the tribulation period and not the Day of the Lord. Peter quoted Joel's promise, *And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.* Acts 2:21 Joel 2:32

This promise of salvation makes the time of Revelation 6:12-13 the tribulation period and not the Day of the Lord or God's wrath. It is an accepted truth that there will be a multitude of Christians during the tribulation period. There will be no salvation during the Day of the Lord because it is a time of wrath - a time of God's judgment of sinners. (Isaiah 13:9)

The Trumpets And Wrath

From our analysis of the seals we learned that they are not God's wrath. We now turn to the trumpets which are listed and discussed in Chapter 4, John's Tribulation. Like the seals they are commonly seen as being God's wrath. That is yet another tribulation fallacy.

The fact is that neither wrath nor judgment are once mentioned with the trumpets. Furthermore, Christians will be on earth during the trumpets so they cannot be God's wrath. Here is John's introduction to the seven trumpets.

1 And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. 2 And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. 3 And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. 4 And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. Revelation 8:1-4

Seven angels are handed seven trumpets but before they blow them John observes a solemn prayer service in heaven. An angel prepares and offers the prayers of the saints on earth up before God on His throne. If

The Tribulation

there are Christians on earth during the trumpets then they cannot be God's wrath because Christians are not destined for wrath. Therefore, the trumpets must be of the tribulation period which precedes God's wrath.

The Old Testament prophet Joel prophesied of the time of the trumpets which Peter recited on the Day of Pentecost at the empowerment of the church. That prophecy was:

And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come... Acts 2:17-20 Joel 2:28-31

God said that in the last days He would show signs in heaven and on earth of blood, fire and vapor of smoke. The first four trumpets consist of those signs: blood, fire and smoke. When did God say He would do this? *before that great and notable day of the Lord* which is the time of God's wrath. The trumpets therefore have to be in the tribulation period.

Jesus, in His prophecy of His Second Coming, gave a similar rendition of Joel's prophecy. *Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.* Matthew 24:29

It scarcely can be argued that Jesus' prophecy speaks of the same time as Joel's - the time of the trumpets. What Jesus said next makes it impossible that the trumpets are the time of God's wrath. Jesus said:

And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Matthew 24:30-31

The Tribulation

That, my dear Christians, is the rapture of the church. If then the rapture doesn't occur until AFTER the events of the trumpets then it is not possible that the trumpets contain God's wrath.

Jesus again alluded to the time of the trumpets in His tribulation prophecy when He said, *For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.* Matthew 24:21-22

Jesus made two notable distinctions about the great tribulation. First, it will consist of things the world has never seen. He said, *For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no nor ever shall be.* It seems doubtful that wars, famine, pestilence and earthquakes, which He named in Matthew 24:6-7, are intended here. Those things have plagued the earth and mankind since creation.

What could the great tribulation be? It will be the events of the six trumpets given in Revelation 8-9. After reading them it is apparent that those events are not by man neither has man ever seen them. The events of the trumpets are God's works and constitute the great tribulation.

Secondly, Jesus predicted, *...for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.* Who are the *elect*? They are the church. What days are to be *shortened*? The days of the great tribulation. How are they to be *shortened*? Jesus did not tell us here but could it be that John revealed it with the fourth trumpet? He wrote:

And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise. Revelation 8:12

The fourth trumpet appears to be time when the days of the great tribulation will be *shortened* as Jesus declared. To explain it beyond what we read would only be conjecture - feeble imagination. This miracle over creation whereby God shortens the length of the days is matched only by His reversing the sun ten degrees for Isaiah and Hezekiah. (II Kings 20:9-10)

The Tribulation

The point: The days of the great tribulation will be shortened, not in number but in length, at the fourth trumpet for the benefit of the church. If the church is on earth during the fourth trumpet then it cannot be a time of God's wrath because the church will not see God's wrath. This proves that the trumpets are NOT God's wrath.

Many preachers see the tribulation and the great tribulation as the same time but that is not so. Jesus placed the great tribulation (Matthew 24:21) after the Abomination of Desolation (Matthew 24:15) which happens half way through the tribulation period. The great tribulation does not follow the tribulation period rather it is the second half of it.

Jesus said that the days of great tribulation will be shortened for the *elect*. The *elect* of the New Testament are the church. That means that the church must be in the great tribulation if those days are to be shortened for them. That draws us to two conclusions.

1. A pre-tribulation rapture is not possible if the church is present in the great tribulation.
2. The great tribulation cannot be a time of wrath if the church is there because the church will not suffer wrath.

Daniel and Jesus made strikingly similar descriptions of the great tribulation.

And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time...

Daniel 12:1

For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. Matthew 24:21

Daniel's *time of trouble* and Jesus' *great tribulation* are the same. It follows the abomination of desolation at the middle mark of the tribulation period. It must not be overlooked that neither Daniel nor Jesus described the *time of trouble* or the *great tribulation* as being wrath or judgment. Trouble and tribulation are not wrath and to call them such is a monstrous mix-up.

Nowhere are the trumpets identified as wrath or judgment because they are part of the tribulation period which precedes God's wrath. The trumpets actually form the days of great tribulation in the second half of the tribulation period. Wrath and judgment are never applied to the tribulation period.

Day Of The Lord

A misunderstanding of the day of the Lord has contributed much to the erroneous belief in a pre-tribulation rapture. Pre-tribulationists believe that the tribulation period is the day of The Lord which makes the seals and trumpets God's wrath along with the vials. If that were true then a pre-tribulation rapture would be necessary but it is not true.

The day of the Lord is named many times in the Bible and is given many descriptions. Here are a few.

Isaiah 13:6 *Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.*

Isaiah 13:9 *Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.*

Isaiah 34:8 *For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion.*

Joel 1:15 *Alas for the day! for the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.*

Zephaniah 1:14-15 *The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly,....That day is a day of wrath...*

The day of the Lord is a time of divine judgment, vengeance and wrath. The salvation of souls is not granted in such a time. We know that many souls will be saved in the tribulation period. It therefore cannot be the Day of the Lord. The church will experience tribulation but not God's judgment, vengeance and wrath. They are administered with the vials (Revelation 15-18) which come **after** the seals and trumpets - **after** the tribulation period.

Here is a favorite day of the Lord passage which pre-tribulationists use to fix the rapture before the tribulation period. *For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they*

The Tribulation

shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.
I Thessalonians 5:2-4

This was part of Paul's teaching to the church at Thessalonica to correct their misunderstanding of the time of the rapture. Because of the tribulation that they were suffering some thought that they were in the Day of the Lord. Paul assured them that the day of the Lord had not arrived but that it would come unexpectedly like a thief in the night. He went on to say that the day of the Lord would come when the world confidently reveled in *peace* and *safety*. That time will be the first three and a half years of the Antichrist's reign.

Most gratifyingly, Paul ended his instruction on the day of the Lord by saying, *For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.* I Thessalonians 5:9 The day of the Lord is a time of *wrath* which comes only from the seven vials. (Revelation 15-18) Paul promised the church *salvation* in that troublesome time that the church was in making it tribulation and not the day of the Lord. There is salvation in tribulation but NOT in wrath.

Day of Christ

Like the day of the Lord the day of Christ has been mishandled. As the day of the Lord pertains to the lost world the day of Christ pertains to the church. The day of Christ meant something special to Paul and the church. Unfortunately it has been another major fallacy of the tribulation period so we will look at Paul's day of Christ.

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition...

II Thessalonians 2:1-3

The Christians at Thessalonica were disheartened. They had heard that *the day of Christ* had already come and they missed it. Paul begged them

The Tribulation

not to yield to what they had heard. He warned them not to allow themselves to be deceived by anyone or by any means. Then he assured them that *that day shall not come* until there first comes *a falling away* (apostasy) and *that man of sin be revealed* (Antichrist).

Some pre-tribulationists maintain that Paul's *day of Christ* should read the "day of the Lord" because they imagine the tribulation period to be the day of the Lord. That implies that Paul was wrong - that he was confused. Was he also wrong with his other mentions of the day of Christ which follow?

Paul introduced *the day of Christ* with these words, *Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him...* Paul named *the day of Christ* or a similar term six other times.

I Corinthians 1:7-8 *Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

I Corinthians 5:5 *To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

II Corinthians 1:14 *As also ye have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are our's in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

Philippians 1:6 *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.*

Philippians 1:10 *That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ.*

Philippians 2:16 *Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.*

Paul's four expressions: the *day of Christ* - the *day of our Lord Jesus Christ* - the *day of the Lord Jesus* - the *day of Jesus Christ* are all the same day. All these verses link the church to the day of Christ which begins with *our gathering together unto him* - the rapture.

The Tribulation

Dr. Charles Feinberg, author of several Biblical books, understood Paul's *day of Christ*. In his astutely written book, **The Minor Prophets**, Dr. Feinberg commented on this time of man's rule, of human government by writing:

"This day will come to an end, as far as the church is concerned, with the Day of Christ, which is the rapture. (see Phil 1:6)"

The *day of Christ* is NOT the day of the Lord when God deals with a lost world. The *day of Christ* begins when He raptures the church from this world. The *day of Christ* continues with His return to earth with the church at the Battle of Armageddon. The *day of Christ* continues with the Millennial Kingdom - a thousand year reign of Jesus Christ and the church on earth.

Some may be mixed up about these two days but God and Christ are not. Those who are in the *day of Christ* will not be in the day of the Lord. Those who are in the *day of the Lord* **missed** the *day of Christ* which begins with the rapture. Which will be your day?

* * * * *

T H A N K Y O U ..

...for purchasing and reading this eBook on "The Tribulation." I hope you enjoyed it and learned from it. I would consider myself failing if you did not.

I would be very pleased to hear from you. Your comments, questions and suggestions would be most welcomed. Please contact me as at:

The Tribulation

Email: phil@sureprophecy.com

Weblog: www.christian-patriots.com

MAY GOD BLESS YOU..... Phil Jellerson, Author