

“Major Events During the Tribulation” Revelation 6

We continue our study of “Coming Events in Bible Prophecy.” We are looking at the events of the last days in chronological order. The next event that we expect to happen is the rapture of the church. The trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised and those of us who are alive will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. When we get to heaven – we will stand before the judgment seat of Christ & receive our rewards.

Today, we’re going to look at what will happen to those left behind on earth during the trib. According to Dan 9, the trib will last for 7 yrs. During those 7 yrs, 7 major events will take place. The first thing that will happen is that:

1. The Antichrist Rises to Power. The antichrist is a human being who starts out as a popular political leader but later becomes a cruel dictator who takes over the world. In the OT, the prophet Daniel tells us where the Antichrist will rule & how he will come to power. Notice 1st what Daniel says about:

A. The Statue with 10 Toes. In Daniel 2, King Neb had a dream of a giant statue that represents the future kingdoms of the world. The head was made of gold representing Babylon (605-539 BC). The chest & arms were silver representing the Medo-Persian Empire (539-331 BC). The belly & thighs were bronze representing Greece (331-168 BC). The legs were made of Iron representing the Roman Empire (168 BC–AD 476). The feet were made of iron & clay representing a future kingdom that will arise in the last days. The 10 toes represent 10 nations that will come together to form 1 kingdom. The fact that the toes are partly of Iron, just like the legs which represent Rome, lets us know that this final world kingdom will be a form of the Roman Empire.

That’s why Bible scholars believe that 10 nations in Europe will join together in the last days to form 1 superpower. Right now, the US is the world’s only superpower. However, after the rapture, the US will lose at least 32 million Christians & will become a 2nd class nation. The balance of power will shift from the US to Europe & the Restored Roman Empire will become the most powerful kingdom on earth.

The book of Daniel not only tells us where the Antichrist will rule, it tells us how he will come to power. In chap 7, Daniel explains a 2nd vision - the vision of:

B. The Beast with 10 Horns. This time Daniel himself receives a vision of the future kingdoms of the world. They appear as animals. Babylon is a lion (Medo-Persia – bear, Greece – leopard, Rome - beast w/ iron teeth & 10 horns). Those 10 horns represent the final version of the Roman Empire that will appear in the last days. The original Roman Empire never had 10 rulers. And 1 of those 10 horns represents the antichrist. He is called the “little horn.” He rules over 1 of the smaller nations at 1st, but eventually takes control of all 10. Dan 7:8 says, “While I was thinking about the horns, there before me was another horn, a little one, which came up among them; and 3 of the first horns were uprooted before it. This horn had eyes like the eyes of a man & a mouth that spoke boastfully.” Here we see that Antichrist will be a powerful communicator (the prophecy emphasizes his mouth). He will be prideful (his mouth will speak boastfully). Dan 7:23-25 goes on to say “The 4th beast is a 4th kingdom that will appear on earth. It will be different from all the other kingdoms & will devour the

whole earth, trampling it down & crushing it. The 10 horns are 10 kings who will come from this kingdom. After them another king will arise (antichrist), different from the earlier ones; he will subdue 3 kings. He will speak against the Most High & oppress his saints & try to change the set times & the laws. The saints will be handed over to him for a time, times & ½ a time.” That’s 3 ½ yrs – the last ½ of the trib. Again we see the antichrist will rule over 10 nations.

Now, is there any evidence that a coalition of nations is coming together in the area occupied by the former Roman Empire? Yes, there is an economic & political partnership of 28 nations called the European Union. Some of those nations are tiny like Malta and Slovenia. Perhaps the 10 horns refer to the 10 major nations in that union (Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, Romania, Spain, and England). It’s very obvious that Dan 7 could be fulfilled - one man could rise to power and rule over 10 nations in Europe.

That leads us to the 2nd major event during the Trib. After the Antichrist rises to power, he gains popularity when he negotiates peace in the Middle East.

2. The Antichrist Makes a Covenant with Israel. Dan 9:27 says, “He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.' In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing [of the temple] he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him”. 1st of all, we see the length of the trib. One “7” is a wk of yrs. That period begins with this covenant.

Apparently this treaty will allow the Jews to rebuild their temple & reinstitute the sacrificial system. It says - in the middle of the 7 yrs “He will put an end to sacrifice & set up an abomination on a wing of the temple.” Do the Jews have a temple today? It was destroyed in 70 AD. Why don’t the Jews rebuild their temple? Because the land belongs to someone else. In this photo of the wailing wall, what do you see behind it on top of the temple mt – the Dome of the Rock (a Muslim holy place- the location of the holy of holies). There is also a Muslim Mosque nearby. Apparently, the antichrist will convince the Arabs (force) to give up that land so the Jews can rebuild their temple.

During the first part of the tribulation, the world will enjoy peace, but it won’t last long. The 3rd major event during the trib is that:

3. The Birth Pains Become Stronger. In Matt 24 Jesus told his disciples about 6 “birth pains” that will become stronger (more intense) as the end of the age draws closer. The birth pains in Mt 24 correspond perfectly with the 6 seal judgments listed in Rev 6.

The 1st birth pain Jesus mentioned is:

A. False Messiahs. Mt 24:5, “Many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Christ,' & will deceive many.” Rev 6 records the 1st seal judgment, “I looked, and there before me was a white horse! Its rider held a bow, & he was given a crown, & he rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest.” The rider on the white horse is the Antichrist. He comes with a bow but no arrow as a symbol that he conquers through peace (negotiation) rather than warfare. He rides a white horse, just as Jesus does when He returns to earth. But he doesn’t come to bring peace. It says, “He rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest.” He is a counterfeit of the true Messiah.

The antichrist is 1 of many false Messiahs during the trib. The 2nd birth pain:

B. International Warfare. Jesus said in Mt 24:7, "Nation will rise against nation & kingdom against kingdom." Compare that w/ the 2nd Seal. Rev 6:4, "Another horse came out, a fiery red one. Its rider was given power to take peace from the earth & to make men slay each other. To him was given a large sword." That sword represents war. As the antichrist rises to power, other nations will fight against him & 1 another. There will be international warfare. The 3rd birth pain will be:

C. Natural Disasters. Jesus said in Mt 24:7, "There will be famines & earthquakes in various places." That corresponds to the 3rd seal in Rev 6:5-6, "I looked, and there before me was a black horse! Its rider was holding a pair of scales in his hand. Then I heard what sounded like a voice among the 4 living creatures, saying, "A quart of wheat for a day's wages, & 3 quarts of barley for a day's wages." 1 qt of wheat is enough to feed 1 person for 1 day. Food will become so scarce people will work all day to buy 1 qt of wheat (3 qts of barley – what poor people & animals ate). Along with famine will come earthquakes. Rev 6:12, "I watched as he opened the 6th seal. There was a great earthquake." So, natural disasters like famines & earthquakes will increase during the trib. The 4th birth pain is:

D. Intense Persecution. Jesus said in Mt 24:9, "Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, & you will be hated by all nations because of me." That corresponds to the 5th seal – Martyrs. Rev 6:9, "When he opened the 5th seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained."

Many Christians will lose their lives during the trib. The 5th birth pain is:

E. Signs in the Sky. Jesus said in Mt 24:29, "Immediately after the distress of those days "'the sun will be darkened, & the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, & the heavenly bodies will be shaken.' That sounds exactly what will happen during the 6th seal. Rev 6:12-14, "The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair, the whole moon turned blood red, & the stars in the sky fell to earth, as late figs drop from a fig tree when shaken by a strong wind (meteor shower). The sky receded like a scroll, rolling up, & every mountain and island was removed from its place." It will look like the world is falling apart. The best preserved meteorite crater on earth is Barringer crater in AZ. It is 3900 ft in diameter, 590 ft deep. The meteor that caused this was only 160 ft wide. That is tiny compared to the meteorites that will strike the earth during the trib. The final birth pain that will become more intense is:

F. World Evangelization. Mt 24:14 says, "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, & then the end will come." God will raise up a group of 144K evangelists (there are only 25K missionaries in the world today- 6X that). Apparently they are Jews who come to know Jesus as Savior. Rev 7:3-4, "Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God." Then I heard the number of those who were sealed: 144K from all the tribes of Israel." The greatest revival in history will take place during the trib. After John sees the 144K the next thing he sees in heaven are the souls

of those who were saved as a result of their ministry. Rev 7:9, "After this I looked & there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people & language, standing before the throne & in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes & were holding palm branches in their hands." Who are these people? Rev 7:13-14, "Then one of the elders asked me, "These in white robes--who are they, and where did they come from?" I answered, "Sir, you know." And he said, "These are they who have come out of the great trib; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." The great trib is a time of worldwide evangelization but also a time of worldwide persecution.

That brings us to the 4th key event during the trib. The Antichrist will Rise to Power, He will make a covenant with Israel, the Birth Pains will become more intense:

4. The Antichrist Breaks His Covenant with Israel. Dan 9:27, "He will confirm a covenant with many for one '7.' In the middle of the '7' (after 3 ½ yrs) he will put an end to sacrifice & offering. And on a wing [of the temple] he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him". How will he desecrate the temple? He will set up a statue of Himself & demand to be worshipped. 2 Thess 2:4, "He will oppose & will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God." He will set up a 1 world govt & a 1 world religion. Anyone who opposes him will be put to death. Well, God cannot tolerate sin & injustice. So, as the Antichrist seeks to destroy everything that is holy & righteous, God in turn will pour out judgment on Him. That's the 5th major event during the trib.

5. God's Pours Out Judgment on the Kingdom of the Antichrist. There are 3 sets of judgments during the trib. The seal judgments are poured out primarily in the first 1/2 of the trib. Those are the birth pains we mentioned under point 3. In the last ½, God pours out the trumpet judgments & the bowl judgments. I will mention them briefly.

A. The Trumpet Judgments. The first is:

1) Hail & Fire Burn the Vegetation. Rev 8:7 "The 1st angel sounded his trumpet, and there came hail & fire mixed with blood, & it was hurled down upon the earth. A third of the earth was burned up, a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up." Several of these judgments are replicas of the 10 plagues on Egypt (in Exodus) one was hail.

2) An Asteroid Contaminates the Sea. 8:8-9, "The 2nd angel sounded his trumpet, and something like a huge mtn, all ablaze, was thrown into the sea. A third of the sea turned into blood, a third of the living creatures in the sea died, & a third of the ships were destroyed." When God sent the 10 plagues on Egypt, what happened when Moses stretched his staff over the Nile R? The same thing will happen during trib.

3) A Star Contaminates the Rivers. 8:10-11, "The third angel sounded his trumpet, and a great star, blazing like a torch, fell from the sky on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water-- the name of the star is Wormwood (plant found in Israel w/ a bitter taste). A third of the waters turned bitter, and many people died from the waters that had become bitter." 4th trumpet:

4) The Planets Become Dark. 8:12, "The 4th angel sounded his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, & a third of the stars, so that a third of them turned dark. A third of the day was w/o light, and also a third of the night." Instead of 12 hrs of daylight, there will be 8 hrs of daylight & 16 hrs of darkness.

The 5th trumpet brings:

5) Locusts Attack Mankind. 9:3-5, "And out of the smoke locusts came down upon the earth and were given power like that of scorpions of the earth. They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any plant or tree, but only those people who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads. They were not given power to kill them, but only to torture them for 5 mos. And the agony they suffered was like that of the sting of a scorpion when it strikes a man." In Exodus, the locusts ate grass, here they attack people & cause them to suffer for 5 mos. During the 6th trumpet:

6) 4 Demons are Released. 9:14-16, "It (the voice of an angel) said to the 6th angel who had the trumpet, "Release the 4 angels (demons are fallen angels) who are bound at the great river Euphrates (Iraq)." And the 4 angels who had been kept ready for this very hour & day & month & year were released to kill a third of mankind. The number of the mounted troops was 200 million." 4 demons were bound at the Euphrates R. Where is that located? Why is there so much trouble? There are demons at work. 4 of those demons gather an army & kill 1/3 of mankind. That marks the end of the trumpet judgments. The final set of judgments are the bowl judgments. They will be poured out in the final days (hours) of the trib.

B. The Bowl Judgments. The first bowl is:

1) Beast Worshipers Suffer with Sores. Rev 16:2, "The first angel went and poured out his bowl on the land, & ugly & painful sores broke out on the people who had the mark of the beast & worshiped his image." They suffer with malignant tumors or cancers. The 2nd bowl judgment:

2) The Sea Turns to Blood. 16:3, "The 2nd angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it turned into blood like that of a dead man & every living thing in the sea died." The 2nd trumpet judgment killed 1/3 of the fish in the sea, now every ocean is polluted and all the fish die. With the 3rd bowl:

3) Rivers Become Blood. 16:4, "The 3rd angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, & they became blood." Earlier (3rd trumpet) the fresh water became bitter, now it is completely polluted. When the 4th bowl is poured:

4) The Sun Scorches People. 16:8-9, "The 4th angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and the sun was given power to scorch people with fire. They were seared by the intense heat and they cursed the name of God, who had control over these plagues, but they refused to repent & glorify him." Earlier the sun was darkened, but now its power is intensified (massive solar flare) and the earth becomes unbearably hot.

It will be like the time Ellery went to Fla on vacation. It was hot. I'm not saying Ellery talks a lot, but when he came back, his tongue was sunburned. It's going to be worse than that during the Trib. When the 5th bowl is poured out:

5) The Sky Becomes Dark. 16:10, "The 5th angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, & his kingdom was plunged into darkness. Men gnawed their tongues in agony." Before the sun was darkened 1/3 of time, now it becomes completely dark (Like Mammoth cave). When the 6th bowl is poured out:

6) The Euphrates R Dries Up. 16:12, "The 6th angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, & its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the East." What nations are located E of the Euphrates? China Japan. 16:13-14, "Then I saw 3 evil spirits that looked like frogs; they came out of the mouth of the dragon (Satan), out of the mouth of the beast (antichrist) & out of the mouth of the false prophet (right hand man – leader of 1 world religion). They are spirits of demons performing miraculous signs, & they go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty." 3 demonic spirits will gather the armies of the world for battle in the valley of Armag. 7th & final bowl judgement:

7) A Severe Earthquake Devastates Major Cities. 16:17-19, "The 7th angel poured out his bowl into the air, & out of the temple came a loud voice from the throne, saying, "It is done!" Then there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder and a severe earthquake. No earthquake like it has ever occurred since man has been on earth, so tremendous was the quake. The great city (Jer) split into 3 parts, & the cities of the nations collapsed. God remembered Babylon the Great & gave her the cup filled w/ the wine of the fury of his wrath." Babylon the Great is the kingdom of the antichrist. This terrible earthquake destroys the cities that make up his kingdom.

The conclusion of the bowl judgments brings us to the 6th major event during the trib:

6. The Armies of the World Gather for Battle. Rev 19:19, "Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against the rider on the horse and his army." The armies of the world may have originally come to Israel to fight the Jews or the antichrist, but when they see Jesus coming back in the sky, they join together to fight against Him. The final event that concludes the trib is that:

7. The Lord Returns (to Overthrow the Antichrist & Judge the Wicked). Rev 19:11-14, "I saw heaven standing open & there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful & True. With justice he judges & makes war. His eyes are like blazing fire, & on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, & his name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses & dressed in fine linen, white & clean." At the rapture, Jesus returns in the clouds for His saints. At the 2nd coming, Jesus returns to earth with His saints. When Jesus returns, every wrong will be made right. Every evildoer will be punished (righteous person rewarded).

Now, the reason the saints in heaven are dressed in fine linen is not because of their own good deeds, but because they have received the righteousness of Christ. 2 Cor 5:21 says, "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." Jesus died in your place on Calvary so that He could offer you salvation as a free gift. If you have never done so, I invite you to trust Him as Savior. "Jesus is Lord of All"