

Prophecy Unveiled – The Great Tribulation

Sunday, May 1, 2022

Today we close out our Series on Prophecy. Through the last 4 months we have looked at prophecies throughout the Word of God as they relate to

- The Birth of Christ
- Daniel and Ezekiel's Visions
- Matthew 24 & 25
- Jesus' Death
- Persecution
- The Resurrection
- The Rapture and The Second Coming

There is so much more we could look at, but for now let's wrap things up by talking about the later part of the Last Days that we call The Great Tribulation. Events that typically fit between the Rapture of the Church and Jesus' visible return to the Earth.

Revelation 1:1-20

1 The revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, 2 who testifies to everything he saw—that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. 3 Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.

4 John, To the seven churches in the province of Asia:

Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, 5 and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, 6 and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

7 “Look, he is coming with the clouds,” and “every eye will see him, even those who pierced him”; and all peoples on earth “will mourn because of him.” So shall it be! Amen.

8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”

9 I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus, was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. 10 On the Lord’s Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, 11 which said: “Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea.”

12 I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 and among the lampstands was someone like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. 14 The hair on his head was white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. 15 His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. 16 In his right hand he held seven stars, and coming out of his mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.

17 When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: “Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. 18 I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

19 “Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later. 20 The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

Revelation 4:1

4 After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.”

Revelation 1-3 seems to represent the church age, events taking place prior to the Rapture of the Church. Obviously, there would be no reason to speak to the churches following the rapture.

Revelation 1:19 summarizes the nature of prophecy and the events recorded in the book of Revelation. *“What you have seen, what is now and what will take place later.”*

The calling of John up into heaven may also symbolize the rapture of the church and the events that will take place following

Without getting too caught up in the exact timing of these events, (Remember our ground rule for studying prophecy that said the point of studying prophecy is not to be able to set times and dates) let's try to develop a timeline of the events associated with the 7 year period of The Great Tribulation

The Events of the Tribulation Period

(1) [Revelation 4:1-2](#). John, a symbol of the church, is taken up to heaven.

Revelation 3:10

10 Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth.

2 Thessalonians 2:7

7 For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way.

(2) [Daniel 9:27](#). The Antichrist signs a covenant for seven years with the nation of Israel. This is the event that inaugurates the Tribulation period.

The rise of the Antichrist. After the church is taken out of the way ([2 Thessalonians 2:7-8](#)), a satanically empowered man will gain worldwide control with promises of peace ([Revelation 13:1](#); [Daniel 9:27](#)). He will be aided by another man, called the false prophet, who heads up a religious system that requires worship of the [Antichrist](#) ([Revelation 19:20](#)).

NOTE: The First 6 seals seems to parallel Jesus's eschatological discourse in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21.

(3) [Revelation 6:1-2](#). Christ opens the first of the seven-sealed scroll, and the rider on the white horse (probably Antichrist) appears, using diplomacy and the promise of peace to establish his one-world government.

6 I watched as the Lamb opened the first of the seven seals. Then I heard one of the four living creatures say in a voice like thunder, “Come!” 2 I looked, and there before me was a white horse! Its rider held a bow, and he was given a crown, and he rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest.

(4) [Revelation 6:3-4](#). The second seal introduces a red horse and the symbol of war.

3 When the Lamb opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, “Come!” 4 Then another horse came out, a fiery red one. Its rider was given power to take peace from the earth and to make people kill each other. To him was given a large sword.

(5) [Revelation 6:5-6](#). The third seal (black horse) begins the suffering of famine and inflation (the aftermath of war). Sounds like where we are now

5 When the Lamb opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come!” I looked, and there before me was a black horse! Its rider was holding a pair of scales in his hand. 6 Then I heard what sounded like a voice among the four living creatures, saying, “Two pounds of wheat for a day’s wages, and six pounds of barley for a day’s wages, and do not damage the oil and the wine!”

(6) [Revelation 6:7-8](#). The fourth seal results, as do all wars, in death, but in this case it totals one-fourth of the people and living creatures. By today’s population standards, that would amount to one-and-a-half billion people.

NOTE: Possibility of the War of Gog and Magog (Ezekiel 38-40 - Russia) within this timeframe (leading up to or right after the Rapture) Also possibility of how it fits in with the 2, 3, and 4th seals and the 6th seal (Great earthquake)

Ezekiel 38:1-9

38 The word of the Lord came to me: 2 “Son of man, set your face against Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshek and Tubal; prophesy against him 3 and say: ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I am against you, Gog, chief prince of Meshek and Tubal. 4 I will turn you around, put hooks in your jaws and bring you out with your whole army—your horses, your horsemen fully armed, and a great horde with large and small shields, all of them brandishing their swords. 5 Persia, Cush and Put will be with them, all with shields and

helmets, 6 also Gomer with all its troops, and Beth Togarmah from the far north with all its troops—the many nations with you.

7 “Get ready; be prepared, you and all the hordes gathered about you, and take command of them. 8 After many days you will be called to arms. In future years you will invade a land that has recovered from war, whose people were gathered from many nations to the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate. They had been brought out from the nations, and now all of them live in safety. 9 You and all your troops and the many nations with you will go up, advancing like a storm; you will be like a cloud covering the land.

Countries that unite to attack Israel:

<i>Noted</i>	<i>Present-Day</i>
<i>Rosh, Gog, Magog</i>	<i>Russia, Kazakhstan</i>
<i>Meshech, Tubal</i>	<i>Armenia, Azerbaijan, possibly includes Republic of Georgia</i>
<i>Persia</i>	<i>Iran</i>
<i>Cush</i>	<i>Ethiopia with Sudan</i>
<i>Put</i>	<i>Algeria with Libya</i>
<i>Gomer, Togarmah</i>	<i>Syria</i>
<i>Sheba, Dedan</i>	<i>Saudi Arabia, Yemen</i>
<i>Tarshish</i>	<i>Spain</i>

(7) [Revelation 6:9-11](#). The martyred saints

9 When he opened the fifth 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. 10 They called out in a loud voice, “How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?” 11 Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the full number of their fellow servants, their brothers and sisters, were killed just as they had been.

(8) [Revelation 6:12-17](#). This sixth seal exhibits the wrath of God poured out in the form of a mighty earthquake, the like of which has never been experienced. It is so severe that people call on the rocks to fall on them.

Ezekiel 38

19 In my zeal and fiery wrath I declare that at that time there shall be a great earthquake in the land of Israel. 20 The fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the beasts of the field, every creature that moves along the ground, and all the people on the face of the earth will tremble at my presence. The mountains will be overturned, the cliffs will crumble and every wall will fall to the ground. 21 I will summon a sword against Gog on all my mountains, declares the Sovereign Lord. Every man's sword will be against his brother. 22 I will execute judgment on him with plague and bloodshed; I will pour down torrents of rain, hailstones and burning sulfur on him and on his troops and on the many nations with him. 23 And so I will show my greatness and my holiness, and I will make myself known in the sight of many nations. Then they will know that I am the Lord.'

(9) [Revelation 8:1-6](#). The seventh seal introduces the Seven Trumpet Judgments, ending the first quarter of the Tribulation period and preparing for an even worse period called the "day of His [God's] wrath."

NOTE: another possible point for the rapture. Or another view would be for it to mark the midway point of the tribulation and the abomination that causes desolation thus incurring even greater judgements and wrath.

5 Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and hurled it on the earth; and there came peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning and an earthquake.

- *The abomination of desolation. At the midway point of the seven-year tribulation, the Antichrist breaks his covenant with Israel and shows his true colors. The Jews are scattered, and many of them turn to the Lord, realizing that Jesus is their Savior. A great persecution breaks out against all those who believe in Christ ([Daniel 12:11](#); [Mark 13:14](#); [Revelation 12:17](#))*

(10) [Revelation 8:7](#). The first trumpet judgment results in one-third of all trees and green grass being burned up by hail, fire, and blood cast upon the earth.

(11) [Revelation 8:8-9](#). The second trumpet sees a great mountain of sulfur falling into the sea and destroying a third-part of the sea and all living creatures in it and a third of the shipping vessels.

(12) [Revelation 8:10-11](#). The third trumpet causes a great star (or meteor) called *Wormword* (or “bitter”) to fall on the fountains of water and third of rivers to turn bitter, resulting in the deaths of millions.

(13) [Revelation 8:12](#). The fourth trumpet results in one-third less sun, moonlight, and stars, extending the darkness of night.

(14) [Revelation 8:13](#). A special angel flies around the earth, warning that worse judgments are to come.

(15) [Revelation 9:1-12](#). The fifth trumpet introduces hideous demon-like creatures such as scorpions and locusts out of the bottomless pit. Not able to kill men, they torture them so badly that they “will seek death and will not find it.”

(16) [Revelation 9:13](#). The sixth trumpet introduces two hundred million horsemen (demon spirit-like death angels), who kill one-third of the people. This will occur between the fortieth and forty-second month of the first part of the Tribulation, which brings to 50 percent the population that is destroyed by God before the midpoint of the Tribulation. These individuals have taken the mark of the Beast and are considered incorrigibles. Since estimates of upwards of a quarter of those living at that time still be saved under the preaching of the 144,000 mentioned in [Revelation 7:9](#), it is possible that 75 percent of the population 25 percent by martyrdom) will have been destroyed during the first half of the Tribulation period.

(17) [Revelation 11:3-14](#). The Two Witnesses prophesy 1,260 days—a ministry which, if taken literally, would correspond with the forty-two months of judgments already described.

Obviously, these two witnesses are real people with miraculous powers like Moses and Elijah, here to preach and witness during the entire first half of the Tribulation. It may be through their witness that the 144,000 are saved and sent out preaching. As dreadful a time as this will be, God is faithful to provide plenty of gospel preaching to the nations.

(18) [Revelation 11:15](#). The seventh trumpet judgment introduces the awesome events described in chapters 12-18 and the most severe set of judgments yet reported, the Vial Judgments.

- (20) [Revelation 13:1-3](#). the Antichrist is killed and gets “a deadly wound” that is healed. In chapter 12 Satan himself is cast out of heaven, where he has been “the accuser of our brethren,” and now he enters Antichrist’s body and resurrects him to a new and even more vicious life.
- (21) [Revelation 13:4-10](#). Antichrist, now incarnated, will force the remaining people of the earth to worship him, except those whose names are in the Lamb’s Book of Life (see [2 Thessalonians 2:8-10](#)).
- (22) [Revelation 13:11-18](#). The False Prophet will replace the slain religious system, forcing people to worship Antichrist and his image, or be killed. Everyone will be compelled to display a 666 mark in order to hold a job and “buy and sell.”
- (23) [Revelation 16:1-2](#). The first vial causes giant sores on those who rejected Christ and instead accepted the mark of the Beast, signifying their worship of him.
- (24) [Revelation 16:3](#). The second vial is poured out on the sea, turning it “to blood as of a dead man; and every living creature in the sea died.”
- (25) [Revelation 16:4](#). The third vial turns the rivers and other sources of water to blood (an especially just judgment because the people remaining had killed so many Tribulation saints).
- (26) [Revelation 16:8-9](#). The fourth vial will intensify the sun’s heat until ungodly men blaspheme the name of God.
- (27) [Revelation 16:10-11](#). The fifth vial will cause darkness to cover the throne of Antichrist and his entire kingdom. The sores will continue unrelentingly, producing such agony that men will gnaw their tongues for pain and blaspheme God and refuse to repent.
- (28) [Revelation 16:13-16](#). The sixth vial sends lying demon spirits out to the kings of the whole world to bring them down to “the battle of that great day of God Almighty,” more popularly known as the Battle of Armageddon. (Remember different from the battle of Gog and Magog)
- *The Battle of Armageddon. At the end of the tribulation, Jesus returns with the armies of heaven ([Mark 14:62](#)). He saves Jerusalem from annihilation and defeats the armies of the nations fighting under the banner of the Antichrist ([Revelation 19:11–21](#)). The Antichrist and the false prophet are captured and thrown alive into the lake of fire ([Revelation 19:20](#)).*

(29) [Revelation 16:17-21](#). The seventh vial results in a judgment of Almighty God that destroys the entire world system and judges all unsaved men severely. But even though enormous hailstones fall, the unregenerate still refuse to repent. This judgment is so devastating that it prepares the world for the coming of Christ to set up His earthly kingdom.

(19) [Revelation 17:1-18](#). Describes the destruction of the Babylonish, false religious system—the great harlot—which will merge all the religions of the world during the first part of the Tribulation (which will take place easily after the church is raptured). This system will be so powerful that it will dominate both the Antichrist (“the beast”) and the ten kings at that time. But because of their hatred for the harlot, they will make war on her and kill her.

(30) [Revelation 18:1-24](#). The destruction of commercial and governmental Babylon—the New World Order for which man has yearned ever since his rebellion at Babylon—now occurs, possibly during the seventh vial since it fits there (verse 19) just before earth’s final judgment. It will totally collapse the Antichrist’s system and further pave the way for the best event of the Tribulation.

(31) [Revelation 19:11-21](#). We finally witness the Glorious Appearing of Christ in Power and Great Glory as King of kings and Lord of lords to set up His thousand-year reign on this earth.

Tim LaHaye, *No Fear of the Storm*, (Multnomah, Sisters, OR; 1992), pp. 51-57

- *The judgment of the nations. Christ will judge the survivors of the tribulation, separating the righteous from the wicked as “sheep” and “goats” ([Matthew 25:31–46](#)). (It is thought that at this time the Old Testament saints will be raised from the dead.) The righteous will enter the Millennial Kingdom; the wicked will be cast into hell.*
- *The binding of Satan. Satan will be bound and held in a bottomless pit for the next 1,000 years ([Revelation 20:1–3](#)).*
- *The Millennial Kingdom. Jesus Himself will rule the world, and Jerusalem will be the capital. This will be a 1,000-year period of peace and prosperity on earth ([Revelation 20](#); [Isaiah 60–62](#)). Memorial sacrifices will be offered in a [rebuilt temple](#) in Jerusalem ([Ezekiel 40–48](#)).*

- *The last battle. At the end of the 1,000 years, Satan will be released from his prison for a short time. He will deceive the nations once again, and there will be a rebellion against the Lord that will be quickly defeated ([Revelation 20:7–10](#)). Satan will be cast into the lake of fire, never to reappear.*
- *The Great White Throne Judgment. All those in hell will be brought forth, and all the wicked from all eras of history will be resurrected to stand before God in a [final judgment](#) ([Revelation 20:11–15](#)). The verdicts are read, and all of sinful humanity is cast into the lake of fire.*
- *The new creation. God completely remakes the heavens and the earth. It is at this time that God wipes away all tears and there will be no more pain, death, or sorrow. The [New Jerusalem](#) descends from heaven, and the children of God will enjoy eternity with Him ([Revelation 21–22](#)).*

Of course, there is much more to be studied concerning these events and we have done that at different times, like our series through the entire book of revelation. (Young at Heart is also currently studying the book of Revelation). But for this morning we have looked at more than enough of the events of The Great Tribulation Period.

CONVICTION of my need to BE READY by placing my faith in Jesus

1 John 5:1-5

5 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. 2 This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. 3 In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, 4 for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

CHALLENGE of my need to CONTINUE IN MY FAITH

2 Thessalonians 2:7

7 For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way.

CONFIRMATION of the VICTORY OF MY FAITH

Revelation 20:10

10 And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Revelation 21:1-7

21 Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4 ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

5 He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”

6 He said to me: “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. 7 Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children.

CALL to TELL as many people as possible

Revelation 20:15

15 Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

- There is much we can learn from studying prophecy
- There is much that will still be unclear (It is best for us to focus on what we can know rather than argue about what is still unclear)
- The point of studying prophecy is not to be able to set times and dates
- By studying prophecy, we can become more aware of the devil’s schemes and the world in which we live.
- Prophecy helps us be prepared
- We must keep in mind that prophecy must be examined from three different viewpoints