

The Events of the Tribulation Period

Summary of the book of revelation -

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

(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.

(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.

(4) Revelation 6:3-4. The second seal introduces a great world war.

(5) Revelation 6:5-6. The third seal begins the suffering of famine and inflation (the aftermath of war).

(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.

(7) Revelation 6:9-11. This passage introduces the martyrdom of those who are converted under the preaching of the 144,000 Jewish witnesses described in chapter 7. An innumerable number of people receive Christ and are martyred by the government leader and harlot (the religious system described in chapter 17), who gets her power from the Antichrist. Note that evangelism during this period is back in the hands of the Jews. Since the church is absent, the 144,000 apostle-Paul-type believers will make powerful evangelists.

(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.

(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.”

(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. Think of The Poseidon Adventure multiplied times one-third of all the world’s ships!

(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.

Now do you understand why I say that even a mid-Tribulation view of Christ’s coming for His church would mean enormous suffering to millions of believers’

It seems much more reasonable, particularly in the light of His promises to save His church from the “wrath to come,” that He would have His church from the “hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world.” That would certainly be characteristic of our loving, merciful, forgiving heavenly Father and Bridegroom. The saints who are martyred during the Tribulation are not part of the church. They are defined in Revelation 7:14 as “the ones who come out of the Great Tribulation, and [have] washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

(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.

(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, at the midpoint of the Tribulation, they will make war on her and kill her.

(20) Revelation 13:1-3. In the process of killing the harlot Mystery Babylon, the false religious system, somehow 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.”

Plainly, if the church were to go through the Tribulation, she would not survive it. And I find no scriptural evidence that any believers will remain at the end of the Tribulation to be raptured, if that event is post-Trib. Remember, the worst half of the Tribulation period, which our Lord termed the Great Tribulation, has not yet begun! That last forty-two month period is covered by the Vial Judgments.

(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.

(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.

(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.