

# Rapture Ready Series

## Part Four



The Tribulation - The Hour of Trial and the coming wrath of God.

**Rev.1:3** *Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keeps those things which are written in it; for the time is near.*

**John Hagee:** *The Book of Revelation is the roadmap from here to eternity.*

### The Book of Revelation

#### The Vision of Jesus.

It begins with the Vision of Jesus. Why?

Because the Book of Revelation is not about the Anti-Christ as the main character.

The Book of Revelation is the culmination of this victory of Christ and the destruction of all evil.

It is the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the main character. He is the Son of God, the Mighty Conqueror, the Alpha and Omega. He is the Eternal Creator. Everything was created by Him, for Him and through Him. He is the One who has ALL authority and ALL power.

He is also the Son of Man. He is the Last Adam, the Son of David, the overcoming, victorious representative of mankind who rescued us from eternal damnation and separation from God the Father. The Lord Jesus Christ - through whom we were raised from spiritual death to be reconciled once again to the Lord Most High, the Ancient of days, the Lord God Almighty.

As the mediator of the New Covenant, having taken our sin and given us His righteousness, He has brought us back into right standing with the Father, forever more. Amen!

The Book of Revelations is the culmination of this victory of Christ over a defeated enemy.

It is about the total crushing of all rebellion and the final demise of all evil and of all sin. Total and complete annihilation!

There is only one Kingdom going forward from here – one that is ruled by God Almighty and by the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### The Tribulation and its purpose.

In our last teaching we discussed being ready for the Rapture and escaping the time called by Jesus 'the hour of trial' in Rev.3:10, which is coming to test those who dwell on the earth and is commonly spoken of as the Tribulation.

### **The time of testing those who are on the earth.**

As we have already said in our previous teaching...we are coming to the dispensation called the 'fullness of times' where God gathers all who are in Christ and these will go forward into the Eternal Kingdom of God. (**Eph.1:10**).

In order to do this, mankind will go through preordained times of heavenly sifting.

The Tribulation is God testing, searching the inner depths of man's heart to see what really is there. It is all about distinguishing 'the wheat from the tares.'

The Faithful Church is the first of these who will be sifted and gathered by God.

The church is now gone, who is still on the earth?

1. The unfaithful (unbelieving believers.)
2. The unbelieving which includes the Jewish nation.

Why is that distinction significant?

### **The Tribulation is the time when God focuses on Israel.**

It is the 70<sup>th</sup> week of the vision that Daniel had in 539 B.C. (**Daniel 9:24-26**.)

God has a never ending covenant with the Jewish people. He has every intention of getting them saved. The land of Israel is theirs forever and ever and ever. They have never been replaced and they never will be.

The New Covenant was promised to them by prophecy in **Jer.31:31-33** and reiterated by Jesus in **Matt.26:27-29**. Jesus is celebrating Passover with His Jewish disciples, speaking about the New Covenant with them and the time when He will drink of the fruit of the vine with them in His Father's kingdom. This is a totally Jewish event.

**Rom.11:25-26** *For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel UNTIL the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. V26 And so all Israel will be saved.*

It is time for Israel to be saved and be grafted back into their own olive tree. Like Paul the scales will fall from their eyes and they will know the truth.

### **Distinguishing the tares.**

The Tribulation is a time that has been given to the Anti-Christ, the man of sin, the son of perdition, the lawless one (**2 Thess.2:9-12**). It is a time of great deception by the Anti-Christ. It is going to be an unbelievably fearful and disastrous time.

Yet, our God is going to use the plans of the devil to achieve His own goals.

### **Prov.20:26-27**

*A wise king sifts out the wicked, and brings the threshing wheel over them. The spirit of a man is the lamp of the Lord, searching all the inner depths of his heart.*

*Prov.20:30 Blows that hurt cleanse away evil, as do stripes the inner depths of the heart.*

Either the blows and stripes that are going to come upon the world will cleanse away the evil or it will reveal those who will never repent and instead will continue to do evil always.

**Matt.13:24-30** *Another parable He put forth to them, saying: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. So the servants of the owner said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?'*

*But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at that time I will say to the reapers, 'First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.'*

The wheat are those who are wholly committed to God the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. They are GOD conscious and seek to do His Will. The presence of God is manifesting in their behaviour and is evident in their lives. These will go forward with Him into the eternal Kingdom of God.

This will include all those from the Tribulation who have repented and have been willing to die for their faith.

The tares are ALL those who reject His Lordship and are rebellious. They are SELF conscious and seek to do their own will. There is no evidence of God's nature and character in their lives.

***Matt.13:37-43.*** *He (Jesus) answered and said to them: 'He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire.*

*There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to ear, let him hear!'*

Again...can you hear the warning? His plan was never to let evil continue its reign. He has absolutely no intention of tolerating it in the 'hope' that somewhere along the line, evil will fizzle out while He waits for mankind to 'evolve' spiritually. **He can never, never, never, allow even the tiniest seed of rebellion into the Kingdom, do we understand that?** That is why He is sanctifying and cleansing us.

**He is God Almighty and He sets the boundaries and the terms.** He knows the beginning from the end. We only see a very small part of the picture, understanding just a little when compared with God Almighty. It is not our place to question the One who knows all things and sees all things.

Instead let us humble ourselves in the presence of our Creator and surrender our lives, while we still can. My suggestion to you is do all you can to be ready now while it is easy to do so.

Upon this world so lost in deception, the wrath of God is about to be unleashed.

### **The Tribulation.**

The 7 year Tribulation is split into 2 periods of 3 ½ years each. The tribulation and the great tribulation.

### **Where is the church?**

We are in the Father's house and we are going to appear before the Judgment seat of Christ. **2 Cor.5:10 and Rom.14:10.** We are not going to be judged whether we get to stay in heaven or not. We are already there. We will be judged on the gap that exists between where we are and where we should have been had we obeyed the Lord in our lives.

**(1 Cor.3:10-15).** God is going to reward each one of us for what we have done.

### **But for everybody else on earth?**

Clearly, it must start off with absolute chaos on the earth because a great many people have just disappeared. Governments will be struggling to gain control over the massive chaos left

behind. Fear, uncertainty, grief, depression, destruction, anger, rebellion, lawlessness will abound.

At this time, in heaven, we are going to be present in the Throne room as Jesus, the Lamb, the One who is worthy, begins to open the scroll and loose the 7 seals. It is time to loose the rider on the first horse of the apocalypse. **Rev.5**

### **The First 3 ½ years of the Tribulation.**

#### **The Seven Seals – Rev.6:1 – Rev.8:1-6**

The First Seal - The rider on the White horse. He has a bow and has been given authority. He goes out conquering and to conquer.

Clearly then, if he is going out to conquer then he doesn't start off as being the one who is in control. He is going out to defeat other nations.

He is coming into power and he is the Anti-Christ.

We do not know how much of a gap there is between the loosing of each seal but we do know this - war is coming into this mess and war always brings further destruction.

The Second Seal – The rider on the Red horse – the horse of war. This rider is given the power to take peace from the earth and that people should kill one another.

The Third Seal – The rider on the Black Horse - global famine.

A normal outcome of war.

The Fourth Seal – The rider on the Pale Horse is Death and Hades follows him. They are given power to kill 25% of the earth with war, hunger, death and the beasts of the earth. Death will come to the 25% and Hades will take the wicked dead but the believers – absent from the body, present with the Lord.

Sometime before all of this, the arising of the 10 kingdoms is happening. As well as the arising of Mystery Babylon. Mystery Babylon is not a political power but a religious system that has religious influence over the 10 kings. She is a symbol of apostate religions being linked together **before or** after the rapture. The world will commit religious harlotry with her. **Rev.17.**

Now, into this mix, the Anti-Christ will begin to assert himself. He will come into prominence in world affairs. In these first 3 ½ years he will conquer 3 of the 10 kingdoms. (**Dan.7:7-8, Dan.7:23-24**).

#### **But first...**

He will make a 7 year covenant with Israel (**Dan.9:27**) assuring them of protection in their continued establishment as a nation.

Israel will be given the right to rebuild their temple and to restart animal sacrifices and offerings. For the first 3 ½ years he will protect them. But then at the beginning of the second 3 ½ years...he will break the covenant and stop the sacrifices and the offerings (**Dan.9:27**).

Also, around this same time the Two Witnesses from God will be on the earth outside the Temple and they will be there for the first 3 ½ years prophesying. **Rev.11:1-6.**

These will be not be loved by those on the earth but this is God the Father reaching out to His people like never before. (*Perhaps, the 144000 Jewish Evangelists are the fruit of their ministry?*) The Anti-Christ will not do anything to them in this time.

The Jews however, will reject the great whore, Mystery Babylon, obviously, which will make them an enemy of Mystery Babylon and the 10 kings and the Jews will be persecuted by them.

All who resist them will be seen as enemies of the 'State' / 'Coalition' / 'Union'?  
So, many followers of the Lord Jesus Christ be martyred by them. **Rev.17:5-6.**

The Fifth Seal is opened and John sees the Martyrs – Killed by Mystery Babylon and the 10 kings for preaching the word of God and for the testimony which they held during the Tribulation.

These martyrs are given white robes and are resting under the Altar awaiting the arrival of the last martyrs from the Great Tribulation who will be martyred just as they were. They are also awaiting the marriage of the Lamb.

*(All other martyrs from the period before the Tribulation were already resurrected at the beginning of the Rapture and are in heaven.)*

The Sixth Seal – the wrath of God begins – Great Earthquake, the sun became black and the moon like blood. The stars fell to the earth. The sky receded as a scroll. Every mountain and island was moved out of its place. Mankind hid in caves and amongst the rocks and cried to the mountains, 'fall on us and hide us from His wrath.'

Before the Seventh Seal – **Rev.7:1-8**

There are 4 Angels at 4 Corners holding the 4 winds so that there would be no wind anywhere. A 5<sup>th</sup> angel ascends from the east and he has the seal of God to seal the 144000 Jewish evangelists so that they are protected during the Trumpet judgments. They now have the name of the Father on their foreheads.

*(The 144000 are the 'first-fruits' of Israel to be saved after the church is raptured. Rev.14:4)*

These 144000 evangelists will help Israel to understand that Messiah is coming and Jesus is His name.

The Seventh Seal – there will be silence in heaven for half an hour. The seven angels who stand before God are each given a trumpet. Then another angel with a golden censer, comes to stand before the golden altar before the throne. He is given much incense to offer with all the prayers of the saints who are still on the earth and the prayers of the martyrs under the sacrificial altar and it arises before God. Then the angel takes fire from the golden altar and throws it down to the earth and there were thunderings, lightnings and another earthquake.

Then the 7 angels who had the 7 trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

**The Seven Trumpets – Rev.8:7-Rev.11:19**

1. The first trumpet – the first angel sounded – and hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth - 1/3 of the trees were burned up, all green grass is burned up.
2. The second trumpet – the second angel sounded – Something LIKE a great mountain burning with fire (*A meteor?*) was thrown into the sea. A 1/3 of the sea became blood. 1/3 of the living creatures in the sea died, and 1/3 of the ships were destroyed. *Presumably this is in one area of the earth then.*
3. The third trumpet – the third angel sounded – a great star called Wormwood falls from heaven onto a 1/3 of the rivers and springs of water. The waters become wormwood, very bitter and men died from the water. *Also in one area then.*
4. The fourth trumpet – the fourth angel sounded – 1/3 of the sun was struck, 1/3 of the moon and 1/3 of the stars so that 1/3 of them were darkened. 1/3 (4 hours) of the day did not shine. 1/3 (4 hours) of the night was completely dark.

The earth takes 365 days to revolve around the sun. If 1/3 of the sun is darkened then does that not mean that everybody on earth is experiencing total darkness for 4 months of the year?

**Rev.8:13** - An angel flying through the midst of heaven declaring 'Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth because of the next three trumpet blasts.'

5. The fifth trumpet – The fifth angel sounded – A star falls from heaven to the earth. Abaddon (Heb.) The angel prince of the infernal regions, the minister of death and the author of havoc on the earth (Greek) Apollyon- the angel of the bottomless pit – the destroyer is given the key to the bottomless pit which he opens. Thick smoke arises out of the pit. So thick that it blocks out the sun and fills the air. Out of the smoke terrifying locusts arise that have power to hurt and torment men for 5 months. No flora only mankind that has not been sealed (144000 have been sealed). It will be so bad that men will want to die but will not be able to. *This is the First Woe.*
6. The sixth trumpet – the sixth angel sounded – he is commanded to loose the 4 angels who have been bound at the great river Euphrates. This is the longest of Western Asia. Its origin is in Turkey, so it flows from Turkey, through Syria, through Iraq and empties into the Persian Gulf. *This takes place then in Western Asia.*

These 4 angels, have been prepared for the hour, the day, the month and year and are now released to kill 1/3 of mankind. Between them they have two hundred million horsemen prepared especially for this time. The horses had heads like lions and out of their mouths came the following three plagues - fire, smoke and brimstone (sulphur – which is highly flammable and difficult to extinguish). They also have tails like serpents, having heads, and with their tails they do much harm. *This is part of the second woe.*

The rest of mankind who were not killed by these plagues did not repent!

Before the seventh trumpet: The middle of the 'week' – the 7years.

**Rev.10:1-7** Mighty angel with a little book puts his right foot on the sea and his left foot on land, cries out with a loud voice and 7 thunders uttered their voices. John is warned not to write what the 7 thunders said. The angel swears by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven, earth and the sea and everything in them, that there is NO DELAY any longer. The time has come! When the 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet sounds, the mystery of God and all that He has prophesied is finished.

**Rev.11:1-14** The Two witnesses (still in the first 3 ½ years).

The Jews have rebuilt the Temple of God, restored the sacrifices and offerings and are worshiping on the Temple Mount. The area around the temple in the Holy City is still open to the Gentiles. When the Witnesses have finished their testimony, the beast (the Anti-Christ) that ascends out of the bottomless pit kills them. They lie in the street for 3 ½ days and then God resurrects them and calls them up into heaven and their enemies see them ascend. At the same time, a great earthquake in Jerusalem destroys a 1/10<sup>th</sup> of the city, killing 7000, and the rest were afraid, giving glory to the God of heaven.

The witnesses are in heaven before the blowing of the 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet!

*This is the END of the Second Woe.*

We find ourselves now in the middle of the 'week' also known as the interval.