

36 – END TIMES: THE TRIBULATION - PART 4

I. The Reminder (Matthew 24:8)

Scripture Matthew 24:8 (ESV)

All these are but the beginning of the birth pains.

- Jesus pointed out that the things happening now are simply the beginning of birth pains.
- Birth pains are the false contractions that a pregnant woman experiences before labor.
- The wars, natural disaster, famine, and pestilence are the preparation for something that is coming.

II. The Tribulation Judgments

A. The Judgments to Come

- The Book of Revelation presents that there will be three series of seven judgments.

B. The Seal Judgments (Revelation 6:1-17; 8:1)

1. The First Seal (Revelation 6:1-2)

- The conqueror on the white horse mentioned here is the future world ruler, the Antichrist.

2. The Second Seal (Revelation 6:3-4)

- The rider on the red horse represents war as he takes peace from the earth.

3. The Third Seal (Revelation 6:5-6)

- The rider on the black horse represents famine and economic collapse.
- It will take an entire day's wages to pay for a meal.

4. The Fourth Seal (Revelation 6:7-8)

- The rider on the pale horse represents death.
- Hell is the rider's companion.

Biblical Note: Hades (Hell)

The word "Hades" is the Greek word for the realm of the dead. It refers to Hell or a place of torment. It is the New Testament word for the Hebrew word "Sheol" that is used in the Old Testament describing the place of the dead. It is not the final punishment of the wicked. See: Matthew 11:23; 16:18; Luke 10:15, 16:23; Acts 2:27,31; 1 Corinthians 15:22; Revelation 1:18; 6:8; 20:13,14.

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- They were given the power to kill a fourth of the world's population.

5. The Fifth Seal (Revelation 6:9-11)

- With the fifth seal, John sees the souls of Christian martyrs of the Tribulation.
- The martyrs ask God to avenge their deaths on the wicked.
- They are told to wait until the number of martyrs is completed.

6. The Sixth Seal (Revelation 6:12-17)

- The sixth seal reveals great natural disasters.
- There will be a great earthquake.
- The heavens are changed as the sun, moon and stars are affected.
- The great earthquake causes both mountains and islands to shift.

7. The Reaction of the World (Revelation 6:15-17)

- People of all walks of life try to hide themselves from the calamity.
- The people call out for death rather than to face the wrath of God.

8. The Seventh Seal (Revelation 8:1)

- When the seventh seal is opened, there was silence in Heaven for 30 minutes.
- The seventh seal contains the seven trumpets of judgment.

C. The Trumpet Judgments (Revelation 8:6-12; 9:1-21; 11:15-19)

1. The First Trumpet (Revelation 8:6-7)

- With the first trumpet, hail and fire fall upon the earth.
- The hail and fire destroy a third of all plant life on earth.

2. The Second Trumpet (Revelation 8:8-9)

- A flaming mountain is thrown into the sea.

Biblical Note: Burning Mountain

Some scholars believe that the description of the burning mountain fits with a comet or meteor. The impact of this would disrupt sea life causing all living things to die. It would also cause a tidal wave that would destroy ships upon the sea.

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- A third of the sea was turned to blood.
- This parallels God's judgment on Egypt.
- A third of all marine life and ships are destroyed.

3. The Third Trumpet (Revelation 8:10-11)

- A great star falls on a third of the rivers and springs.

Biblical Note: A Great Star

Some scholars believe that the description of the star fits with a comet or meteor. The star is called Wormwood.

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Biblical Note: Wormwood

Wormwood is a bitter desert plant mentioned only once in the New Testament. It is mentioned seven times in the Old Testament where it represents sorrow and bitter judgment.

See: Deuteronomy 29:18; Proverbs 5:4; Jeremiah 9:15; 23:15; Lamentations 3:15, 19; Amos 5:7; Revelation 8:11.

- The water is contaminated resulting in the death of many people.

4. The Fourth Trumpet (Revelation 8:12)

- The fourth trumpet results in a third of the lights of the sky being darkened.

5. The Fifth Trumpet (Revelation 9:1-11)

- The fifth trumpet results in the release of a great horde of locust-like creatures comes upon earth.
- They are to torment all humanity who had not been sealed by God.
- They are not to harm the vegetation of the earth.
- They are not to kill anyone, but simply to torment.
- The torment will be so great that men will want to die, but they cannot.
- The picture is one of Satan's awesome supernatural power.
- They are to afflict humanity for a period of five months.
- The leader of this demonic horde is Satan himself.

6. The Sixth Trumpet (Revelation 9:13-19)

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- The sixth trumpet reveals the release of four demons from imprisonment.
- They are to destroy a third of the world's population.
- John sees an army of 200 million mounted soldiers, which is an awesome invading force.
- This army brings a plague that destroys a third of mankind.
- This army has enormous power to bring destruction.

7. The Lack of Repentance (Revelation 9:20-21)

- In spite of the judgments, men will still refuse to repent and turn to God.
- They will refuse to repent and turn from their worship of false idols.
- They will refuse to repent and turn from their sins.

8. The Seventh Trumpet (Revelation 11:15-19)

- The seventh trumpet contains the seven bowls of judgment.

D. The Bowl Judgments (Revelation 16:2-21)

1. The First Bowl (Revelation 16:2)

- The first bowl produces ugly and painful sores upon followers of the beast.

2. The Second Bowl (Revelation 16:3)

- The second bowl destroys every living thing in the seas.

3. The Third Bowl (Revelation 16:4-7)

- The third bowl turns the rivers and streams into blood.

4. The Fourth Bowl (Revelation 16:8-9)

- The fourth bowl causes the sun to scorch the earth and mankind.
- Mankind will blaspheme God and refuse to repent of their sins.

5. The Fifth Bowl (Revelation 16:10-11)

- The fifth bowl is poured out on the beast and his kingdom.
- It causes a darkness and intense pain.

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- Once again men refuse to repent and blaspheme God.

6. The Sixth Bowl (Revelation 16:12-16)

- The sixth bowl causes the River Euphrates to be dried up.
- Three demons proceed to gather the armies of the world.
- The armies of the world gather at Armageddon.

Biblical Note: Armageddon

The word "Armageddon" refers to the battleground for the final battle between forces of Jesus Christ and the forces of the Antichrist. The site of the battle has identified with the Valley of Jezreel and the Plain of Esdraelon at the foot of Mount Megiddo. This site has been the scene of many decisive incidents in the history of Israel.

7. The Seventh Bowl (Revelation 16:17-21)

- The last bowl is poured in the air.
- The greatest of all earthquakes destroys most of the earth.
- Mankind will continue to blaspheme God.