

# The Tribulation: Christ Reclaims the World.



The darkest days of human history are yet to occur according to the prophetic scriptures. This is called **the Tribulation period**. The prophet Daniel foretold of the Tribulation as *"...Then there will be a time of anguish greater than any since nations first came into existence..."* (Daniel 12:1 NLT). Also, Jesus spoke to his disciples about the Tribulation period in the Olivet Discourse. He said: *"21 For there will be greater anguish than at any time since the world began. And it will never be so great again. 22 In fact, unless that time of calamity is shortened, not a single person will survive. But it will be shortened for the sake of God's chosen ones."* (Matthew 24:21-22 NLT). The Bible reveals that no time in history equals the turmoil, destruction, and display of evil as that of the Tribulation period. **According to prophecy, the worst is yet to come!**

Bible teacher and author, Tim LaHaye, writes: **"No other event in the Bible, except perhaps the Second Coming itself, is mentioned more frequently than the Tribulation"** (*Are We Living in the End Times?* p.151).

References to the Tribulation period are scattered throughout both the **Old** and **New Testaments**. In the **Old Testament** it is called: ● A time of trouble for Jacob (Jeremiah 30:7); ● The one 'seven' [of Daniel's Seventy Weeks (or sevens)] (Daniel 9:27); ● The time of [God's] wrath (Isaiah 26:20-21; Daniel 11:36); ● A day of vengeance, a year of [divine] retribution (Isaiah 34:8; 35:4; 61:2); ● A time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then (Daniel 12:1); ● The great day of the Lord, a day of trouble and ruin, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and blackness, a day of trumpet and battle cry (Zephaniah 1:14-16).

In the **New Testament** it is called: ● The day of the Lord (1 Thessalonians 5:2); ● Birth pains (Matthew 24:8); ● God's wrath (Revelation 14:10, 19; 15:1, 7; 16:1); ● The hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth (Revelation 3:10); ● The great day of the wrath of the Lamb (Revelation 6:16-17); ● The coming wrath (1 Thessalonians 1:10; Revelation 11:18); ● Great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again (Matthew 24:21, 29); ● The great tribulation (Revelation 7:14); ● The hour of his [God's] judgment (Revelation 14:7).

## Main Lesson & Application

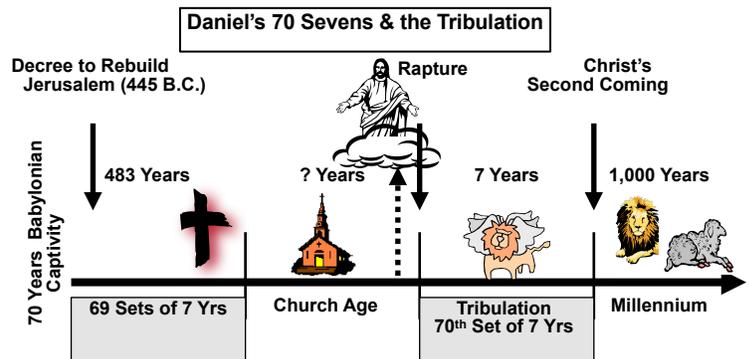
**God has a constructive purpose for pain, problems, and tribulation—He uses them to reclaim people from the grip of evil.**

The Tribulation period and the everyday tribulations of life are **two different subjects**, yet **God's purpose for both is similar**. The ultimate purpose for the Tribulation period is **Christ reclaiming the world from evil**—sin, the devil, the antichrist, the self-centered, immoral one-world system, etc. Similarly, one purpose (among others) of everyday trials is **to reclaim our individual lives from evil**. Hard times **build** our character, **purify** our heart from sinful fleshly desires and **strengthens** our faith. *Are you going through a time of personal tribulation?* Does sin have a grip on your life in some way—a habit, an attitude, on-going misbehavior, an addiction, a sinful stronghold? God wants to free us and purify us. He will use pain, problems, and tribulation to pry loose the grip that sin has on our lives.

## What Is the Tribulation Period?

The Tribulation period is **seven-year** characterized by unparalleled turmoil and God's judgment before the Second Coming of Christ to the earth. The seven-year length of time comes from Daniel's vision of the seventy sets of sevens [NLT] (Daniel 9:24-27). The Tribulation is the "one set of seven" [the 70<sup>th</sup> week] (v.27) when the Antichrist makes a covenant [a peace treaty] with Israel. The Tribulation will begin with the signing of the peace treaty between Israel, her neighboring countries, and the Antichrist.

Also, the book of Revelation verifies that the Tribulation is 7 years when it refers to half of the Tribulation as 1260 days, or 42 months, or *"a time, times and half a time"* [for three-and-one-half years] (Rev. 11:2-3; 12:6, 14; 13:5).



## What Is God's Purpose for the Tribulation Period?

### 1. God's **JUDGMENT** on Evil & Christ Reclaims the World.

Many people misunderstand the nature of the Tribulation period as a time when the devil and the Antichrist are triumphant and taking control of the earth. However, the Tribulation period is not the triumph of evil, but the triumph of righteousness. It is a **time of God's judgment upon the evil of the world**. (See Revelation 6:16-17; 11:16-18; 14:9-10, 18-19; 15:1, 7; 16:1, 17-19; 19:15).

### 2. God's **PURIFICATION** of Israel.

Daniel records that the Tribulation period was *"...decreed for your people..."* a reference to Israel (Daniel 9:24) and *"...to finish their rebellion, to put an end to their sin, to atone for their guilt..."* God will use the Tribulation period to purify the hearts of Israel, to turn them to Christ, and prepare them for the Millennial kingdom of Christ.

### 3. **SALVATION** of Multitudes.

Although the Tribulation period is primarily a time of God's wrath and judgment, it **also is a time of mercy, grace, and salvation** for multitudes of people. The Tribulation catastrophes will shake the false sense of confidence that people have in themselves and the world system. Evidence that multitudes will experience salvation during the Tribulation is seen in Revelation 7:9 and 14.

### 4. God Bringing Time to an **END**.

God has a time table as indicated by Daniel's vision of the **seventy sets of sevens** [NLT] (Daniel 9:24-27). Time, as we know it, **has to come to an end** and **eternity must begin**. The Tribulation (and the Millennium) is God's ending of time.

**God has a constructive purpose for pain, problems, & tribulation - He uses them to reclaim people from the grip of evil.**

**Suggested Action Steps:** ► Receive Christ as your Savior. ► As a Christian dedicate yourself to Christ. ► Read Revelation 6, 8, 9 & 16. Make a list of the Tribulation events. ► Invite someone to next Sunday's Bible study on the End Times. ► Attend the next small group discussion on this topic.

# Summary of Judgments in the Book of Revelation

## ► The Seven SEAL Judgments

1. The White Horse (6:1-2) the Arrival of Antichrist.
2. The Red Horse (6:3-4) War throughout the World.
3. The Black Horse (6:5-6) World-wide Famine.
4. The Pale Horse (6:7-8) Death of ¼ of the World's Population.
5. Seal Five (6:9-11) Religious Persecution & Martyrs.
6. Seal Six (6:12-17) Worldwide Terror (Similar to nuclear war).
7. Seal Seven (8:1-2) The Seven Trumpet Judgments.

## ► The Seven TRUMPET Judgments

1. Trumpet One (8:7) 1/3 of Earth's Vegetation Destroyed.
2. Trumpet Two (8:8-9) 1/3 of Sea Life Destroyed.
3. Trumpet Three (8:10-11) 1/3 of Fresh Water Polluted.
4. Trumpet Four (8: 12-13) 1/3 of Sky Darken.
5. Trumpet Five (9:1-12) Agonizing Torment of the Earth's Population.
6. Trumpet Six (9:13-21) 1/3 of Remaining Earth's Population Killed by an Army of 200 Million.
7. Trumpet Seven (11:15-19) the Seven Bowl Judgments.

## ► The Seven BOWL Judgments

1. Bowl One (16:1-2) Malignant Sores on Worshippers of the Beast.
2. Bowl Two (16:3) All Sea Life Dies.
3. Bowl Three (16:4-7) Fresh Water Turned to Blood.
4. Bowl Four (16:8-9) Scorching Heat from the Sun.
5. Bowl Five (16:10-11) Antichrist's Kingdom in Darkness.
6. Bowl Six (16:12-16) Euphrates Dried and China Marches towards Armageddon.
7. Bowl Seven (16:17-21) Catastrophic Disturbance and Destruction in Nature.