

Rigged for the Journey
THE TRIBULATION JUDGMENTS

Lesson 12D

Introduction:

- A. There will be many judgments levied upon the Earth during the Tribulation period. Concerning these judgments, Jesus says: **“For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened” (Matthew 24:21-22).**¹
- B. These judgments are tools God will use to pour out His wrath upon sin and to purge the Earth of all ungodliness. This will prepare the Earth for the return of Christ to rule as “King of kings” and “Lord of lords.”
- C. While these judgments will destroy much life and property during the Tribulation, they will also display the love of God for a sinful world. Every judgment will remind all of those who might believe that the Beast is god that he has no control over the judgments the plague the Earth. Therefore the Beast does not possess the attributes of Jehovah God. This reality will lead many to accept Christ during the Tribulation.
- D. With the above in mind, we are prepared to study the Judgments of the Tribulation.

I. The Seven Sealed Judgments

- A. Only Christ can open up the seals on the Book of Redemption (Revelation 5:5-6).

“But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals." And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth” (Revelation 5:5-6).
- B. The first seal revealed a rider on a white horse symbolizes the beast and his kingdom on earth (Revelation 6:1-2).

“Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, "Come and see." And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer” (Revelation 6:1-2).
- C. The second seal revealed a rider on a red horse is a symbol of war. There will be a great world war as the beast tries to maintain his position as world leader (Rev 6:3-4).

¹ Unless otherwise specified, all scriptural quotations will be made from the New King James Version of the Bible. In order to be true to the source, all verses will remain in their original printed format.

“When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, "Come and see." Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that [people] should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword” (Rev 6:3-4).

- D. The third seal revealed a rider on a black horse which is evidently a symbol of a world **famine**. This seal reveals a scarcity of food in the world (Rev 6:5-6).

“When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come and see." So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine” (Rev 6:5-6).

- E. The fourth seal revealed a rider on a pale horse which is a symbol of **death**. This passage indicates that one-fourth of the world population would be killed during this period. Since Hades follows the pale horse, it would indicate that all these dead are unsaved (Rev 6:7-8).

“When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, "Come and see." So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth” (Re 6:7-8).

- F. The fifth seal revealed the death of the saints of God because of their **faith** and their plea for God's vengeance during this period (Rev 6:9-11).

“When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both [the number of] their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they [were], was completed” (Rev 6:9-11).

- G. The sixth seal reveals a catastrophe on earth. A giant **earthquake**, stars falling to the earth, volcanic eruptions, and great changes in the earth's landscape occur. Those who are living on the earth at that time will know the judgment is from the Lord Jesus Christ (Rev 6:12-17).

“I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! "For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand” (Rev 6:12-17)?

- H. The seventh seal revealed seven angels with seven trumpets. Each trumpets represented a judgment of God (Rev 8:1-2).

“When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets” (Rev 8:1-2).

II. The Seven Trumpet Judgments:

- A. When the first trumpet sounds; "hail and fire mixed with blood" fell upon the earth, resulting in $\frac{1}{3}$ of the earth's surface being burnt down (Rev 8:7).

“The first angel sounded: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up” (Rev 8:7).

- B. When the second trumpet sounds, "a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea," resulting in the death of $\frac{1}{3}$ of the marine life and a loss of $\frac{1}{3}$ of the ships in the sea (Rev 8:8-9).

“Then the second angel sounded: And [something] like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood. And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed” (Rev 8:8-9).

- C. When the third trumpet sounds, a meteor will fall in just the right spot to pollute the water supply of $\frac{1}{3}$ of the rivers. Those rivers will become so polluted that those who depend on them for water will die (Rev 8:10-11).

“Then the third angel sounded: And a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter” (Rev 8:10-11).

- D. When the fourth trumpet sounds, $\frac{1}{3}$ of the light from the heavens will be diminished. The earth's temperature will be decreased and vegetation will be destroyed (Rev 8:12).

“Then the fourth angel sounded: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night” (Rev 8:12).

- E. The fifth trumpet is the first of the "woe" judgments (Rev 9:1-12).

1. This passage depicts an army of fully armored demons from the pit of hell (Rev 9:1-3, 7-10).

“Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power” (Rev 9:1-3).

“The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like gold, and their faces [were] like the faces of men. They had hair like women’s hair, and their teeth were like lions’ [teeth]. And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings [was] like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle. They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power [was] to hurt men five months” (Rev 9:7-10).

2. They are led by **Abaddon** which means "**destroyer**" (Rev 9:11).

“And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew [is] Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon” (Rev 9:11).

3. These demons are given power to inflict **pain** and torment upon the face of the earth, through their tails, for five months (Rev 9:5).

“And they were not given [authority] to kill them, but to torment them [for] five months. Their torment [was] like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man” (Rev 9:5).

4. The pain produced from their sting will be so intense that men will beg to **die** (Rev 9:6).

“In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them” (Rev 9:6).

5. This woe judgment appears to be against only **unbelievers** (Rev 9:4).

“They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads” (Rev 9:4).

F. The sixth trumpet is the second "woe" judgment (Rev 9:13-21).

1. In this judgment, **four** evil (bound) angels are loosed upon the earth leading their army of 2,000,000 demons (Rev 9:13-14, 16).

“Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, “Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates” (Rev 9:13-14).

“Now the number of the army of the horsemen [was] two hundred million; I heard the number of them” (Rev 9:16).

2. They will **kill** 1/3 of the world's population (Rev 9:15).

“So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind” (Rev 9:15).

3. It appears that only **unbelievers** are killed in this judgment (Rev 9:20).

“But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk” (Rev 9:20).

- G. The seventh trumpet will not initiate anything on the earth. It is the signal that begins the seven vial or **bowl** judgments toward the end of the tribulation period (Rev 11:15-19).

"Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdoms of this world have become [the kingdoms] of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!' And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying: 'We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come, Because You have taken Your great power and reigned. The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth.' Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail" (Rev 11:15-19).

III. The Seven Bowl Judgments of God's Wrath

- A. The first bowl judgment comes upon the worshipers of the beast. Only those who have accepted the mark of the beast will be affected by this judgment. Those affected will have **boils** come up all over their bodies (Rev 16:1-2).

"Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, 'Go and pour out the bowls of the wrath of God on the earth.' So the first went and poured out his bowl upon the earth, and a foul and loathsome sore came upon the men who had the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image" (Rev 16:1-2).

- B. The second bowl will see all the sea turn into **blood**. Every living thing in the sea will be killed. The sea will no longer be hospitable to life. It may represent the fact that all those who have taken the mark of the beast are spiritually dead (Rev 16:3).

"Then the second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it became blood as of a dead [man]; and every living creature in the sea died" (Rev 16:3).

- C. The third bowl reveals that all the sources of good water left on the earth are turned to **blood**. They are no longer able to nourish the body with the much needed commodity of water. This possibly represents that all hope for eternal life has passed by those who have taken the mark of the beast (Rev 16:4-7).

"Then the third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters saying: 'You are righteous, O Lord, The One who is and who was and who is to be, Because You have judged these things. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, And You have given them blood to drink. For it is their just due.' And I heard another from the altar saying, 'Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous [are] Your judgments" (Rev 16:4-7).

- D. The fourth bowl reveals enormous **heat** is generated by the sun. It begins to scorch men living on the earth. This is almost like a picture of hell where the fire is not quenched and thirst never ends (Rev 16:8-9).

“Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and power was given to him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory” (Rev 16:8-9).

- E. The fifth bowl reveals **darkness** being poured out upon the beast and his kingdom. This judgment may provide some relief from the heat of the fourth bowl judgment, but the followers of the beast will curse God for the judgments instead of thanking Him for the relief. Notice that there is no question from the inhabitants of earth of where these judgments originate, God Himself (Rev 16:10-11).

“Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain. They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds.” (Re 16:10-11 NKJV)

- F. The sixth bowl reveals that the river Euphrates will be **dried up** to allow the armies from the East to meet the armies of the beast to come together for judgment at Armageddon (Rev 16:12-16).

“Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs [coming] out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, [which] go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. "Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed [is] he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame." And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon” (Rev 16:12-16).

Notice in verse 15 that Christ encourages believers who are living witnesses of these horrible catastrophes to remain **faithful** until the end. This is the message for believers in this age (1 Cor 15:58).

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Cor 15:58).

- G. The seventh bowl will begin with a gigantic **earthquake** such as the world has never seen. In this earthquake, the cities of the world will fall, Babylon the center of the beast's power will be destroyed, and there will be a major change in the earth's topography. During this judgment, hail stones the weight of a talent (135 pounds) will fall upon the earth. This one judgment will throw the entire world into confusion. The saying, "it is done," by the angel shows that God's wrath has been completely poured out on sin. This judgment marks the **return** of Christ to the earth to take back what is rightfully His and setup His Kingdom on earth (Rev 16:17-21).

“Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, "It is done!" And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth. Now the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And great Babylon was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath. Then every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And great hail from heaven fell upon men, [each

hailstone] about the weight of a talent. Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great” (Rev 16:17-21).

Conclusion:

- A. The Great Tribulation is where God takes up His final plan with the nation of **Israel**. The Church will be called up into the presence of Christ.
- B. It is a period of time where God’s **wrath** will be poured out upon fallen man and evil will prevail unhindered until the physical second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. A period of time marked by physical disaster, human carnage, and satanic rule.
- C. The reality of the coming Great Tribulation should lead the Church to seek out the **lost**, so they will not be left behind to face the awful wrath of Almighty God (John 3:36).

“He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him” (John 3:36 NKJV)

Spending Time with the Master²

Day 1: Revelation 16

What God said:

My Response to God:

Day 2: Revelation 17

What God said:

My Response to God:

Day 3: Revelation 18

What God said:

My Response to God:

Day 4: Revelation 19

What God said:

My Response to God:

Day 5: Revelation 20

What God said:

My Response to God:

Suggested reading: *Rigged for the Journey*, Chapter 11

Memory Verse: John 3:36

“He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him” (John 3:36 NKJV).

² Idea taken from MasterLife “Daily Master Communication Guide”, Avery T. Willis, Jr. and Kay Moore, *The Disciple’s Cross*, LifeWay Press: Nashville, TN., 1996, p. 14.