

## 1) Signs of The End...

- Jesus describes the signs of **two different major events** – **The Rapture** and the **2<sup>nd</sup> Coming** of Jesus. These are discussed in detail in **Matthew 24** and the parallel **Luke 21 - Olivet Discourse**.

### a) Example of the Fig tree

- End Time Signs are like a fig tree. He specifically referred to the process/season, the right season will put out leaves first, then blossoms, then fruit, a sign of the fruit to come. Matt 24:32-35
- **The End...** signs is not only characterised disasters, but also but the frequency of the disasters. There is an escalation of events, the gap between the events is diminishing.

### b) Firstly, signs leading up to the tribulation


- **War on a large scale**  
Jesus foretold: *“Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom.”* Matt 24:7
- **Famine.** Jesus foretold: *“There will be food shortages.”* Matt 24:7
- **Great earthquakes**  
Jesus said that there would be *“earthquakes in one place after another”* Matt 24:7, Luke 21:11
- **Disease**  
According to Jesus, there would be *“pestilences, or epidemics of terrible diseases”* Luke 21:11
- **Crime “increasing of lawlessness”** Matt 24:12
- **Deteriorating attitudes**  
The Bible foretold that people in general would be *“unthankful, disloyal, . . . not open to any agreement, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, without love of goodness, betrayers, headstrong, puffed up with pride.”* 2 Tim 3:1-4
- **Breakdown of the family.** The Bible foretold that many people would have *“no affection”* for their family and that children would be *“disobedient to parents.”* 2 Tim 3:2-3
- **Diminished love of God**  
Jesus foretold: *“The love of the greater number will grow cold”* and *“lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God.”* Matt 24:12, 2 Tim 3:4
- **Religious hypocrisy**  
People would *“appear to worship God but would not truly live by his standards”* 2 Tim 3:5
- **Widespread apathy and ridicule**
  - Jesus foretold that people in general would ignore the overwhelming evidence of the approaching end - as in the days of Noah Matt 24:37-39
  - Peter said, that some would ridicule evidence, dismissing it completely 2 Peter 3:3, 4
- **Increased understanding of Bible prophecies**  
The book of Daniel foretold that in *“the time of the end,”* many would gain increased knowledge of Bible truth, including accurate understanding of these prophecies Dan 12:4
- **A global preaching work.** Jesus foretold: *“This good news of the Kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth”* Matt 24:14

## 2) The Tribulation

### a) Tribulation is called:

- The word translated as *“tribulation”* comes from the Heb *‘šārā’* and the Greek *‘th-lip-sis’*
- The basic meaning: **trouble, hardship, suffering, affliction, distress & pressure**
- Root meaning *“narrow”* or *“compressed”* - point of crushing Num. 22:26, Job 41:15
- English *“tribulation”* comes from the Latin word *‘tribulum’* meaning *“a threshing sledge,”* which uses pressure and embedded stone to create friction to separate chaff from heads of grain.

## b) Tribulation Judgements

- The Tribulation is a series of judgments that occur in order as a chronological sequence
  - The judgments generally increase in magnitude and severity, both within each set and from one set to another, like a mother's labour leading up to childbirth
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Matt 24:8
- a) **Seals** – *Antichrist, Bloodshed & War, Famine & Scarcity, Pestilence, ¼ px death* Rev Chpt 6
  - b) **Trumpets** - *⅓ trees, grass, ships, oceans, sun, moon & stars destroyed, ⅓ Humanity die* Rev Chpt 8 - 9
  - c) **Bowls** - *festering sores, sea dead, sun scorch with fire, pain and suffering gnaw* Rev Chpt 15 - 16

## c) Purpose of the Tribulation – Three fold

### 1. To purify Israel

Zeph 1:4, Daniel 9:24

- Israel initially rejected the Messiah, the Tribulation will open their eye to Jesus/Mesiah
- The conversion of the Jewish remnant to faith in Jesus as their Messiah Zach 13:9
- Zechariah speaks of a purging out of the non-elect Jewish element from the nation Zech 13:8
- *“gather you [Israel] and blow on you with the fire of My wrath, and you will be melted in the midst of it”* Ezek 22:17-22

### 2. To punish sinners

Nah 1:2-3

- Wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men Rom 1:18
- To put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness Dan 9:24

### 3. Salvation

- Christ always prefers repentance to judgment
  - 144,000 Jewish people from every tribe will preach the gospel Rev 7:2-8, Rev 14:1-5
  - Prophesying of the Two Witnesses - *Moses (Enoch) & Elijah?* Rev 11:1-12
  - Angel proclamation of the gospel to every nation *“Fear God and give Him Glory”* Rev 14:6-7
- God does not want anyone to perish, all should be saved 2 Pet 3:9
  - Existing Bibles, internet, sermons & books
  - However, There will be a strong delusion from satan 2 Thess 2:8-12
  - The Beast and the Antichrist will imitate the life of Christ and bring deception Rev 13:12-14
    - No salvation possible if you receive the mark of the beast Rev 14:9-11
    - Believing during the tribulation would most likely result in martyrdom Rev 6:9-12

#### Note:

- *If you die and leaves this world without accepting Jesus' salvation, it's too late to be saved* Heb 9:27
- *Behold **NOW** is the acceptable time, **NOW** is the day of salvation* 2 Cor 6:2

## d) Tribulation Saints

- The tribulation saints are, quite simply, people who believe in Jesus Christ during the tribulation and refuse to follow the Antichrist or accept his mark.
- The tribulation saints will serve their Lord Jesus Christ in the midst of desperate surroundings.
- The Bible indicates that a great number of people during the tribulation will place their faith in Jesus Christ. Rev 7:9-14
- Those that are martyred will be saved Rev 12:11, Rev 11:1-12

## e) Duration of the Tribulation

- Daniel gives a prophecy of **'70 weeks'** of years. Chpt 9
  - Almost all commentators agree that the seventy 'sevens' should be understood as seventy 'weeks of years', in other words, a period of **490 years**
- It accurately gives **483yrs (69 weeks)** years from the declaration to rebuild the temple (444BC), to the death of Jesus. This fulfils the first **69 weeks**. Neh 2:1-8

- But there is a **gap 1** in the prophecy, a gap between the **69<sup>th</sup>** week and the **70<sup>th</sup>** (Tribulation)
- We are currently sitting we think at the **END** that gap - Daniel did not say how long it was!

### 3) Satan and the Antichrist

- Satan is at the moment in the first heavens (earth's atmosphere)  
*'principalities and powers of the air'* – he is the *'ruler of this 'world'* John 12:31, 2 Cor 4:4, Eph 6:12
- Satan is cast onto the earth, he only has a short while and he is very angry Rev 12:9-12
- Only when the restrainer is removed (Holy Spirit), will the antichrist rise to power and start the tribulation. 2 Thess 2:7
  - Antichrist reveals himself and takes charge 2 Thess 2:3-8
  - The Antichrist will broker a 7-year peace treaty Dan 9:27
  - A world empire will form, eventually led by the Antichrist Dan 7:7, 24
  - He will be assassinated &, apparently, brought back to life Rev 13:3
  - He will betray Israel, defile the rebuilt Jewish temple, and demand worship 2 Thess 2:4
  - The Antichrist & False prophet will martyr those who reject him Rev 13:15
  - He will gather all nations against Jerusalem for Armagedon Rev 16:16
  - He gives the mark of the beast
- After the Tribulation, Satan is then chained and cast into the bottomless pit so that he can't deceive the nations for 1,000 years Rev 20:1-3
- the Antichrist/beast, along with his false prophet, will be thrown into the lake of fire, where they will spend all eternity in torment Rev 19:20; Rev 20:10

#### f) Tribulation is called:

- Moses called it the day of **calamity** Deut 32:35
- Daniel called it a **time of trouble** such as never been seen before Dan 12:1
- Apostle John called it the **hour of trial** Rev 3:10
- Apostle John be revelation called it the **hour of His judgement** Rev 14:7
- The tribulation is called **wrath of God** 1 Thess 1:10, 5:9, Col 3:6, Rev 6:17, 14:19, 15:7, 16:1...
- Zephaniah called it a day of **wrath, distress, desolation, gloominess, darkness** Zeph 1:15
- Zephaniah said we can be hidden (**Rapture?**) from the **Lords anger** – seek righteousness Zeph 2:2-3

### 4) The Rapture

#### a) Tribulation (Wrath of God) is not for the Bride / Church

- There is a promise of protection from the Tribulation - church is always exempt from the wrath
- *Jesus made the payment with his own blood. We are purified by the blood not by tribulation. Jesus died to forgive our sin and remove the penalty of sin, total forgiveness, first time, no need for further punishment / tribulation only for the wicked.*
- *You were MADE Holy, you were MADE Righteous* Rom 5:1, Heb 10:10
  - *Waiting for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead —Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath. (NIV)* 1 Thess 1:10
  - *God did not appoint us to wrath, but obtain salvation* 1 Thess 5:9
  - *Jesus justified us by His blood, we are saved from wrath through Him* Rom 5:9
  - *The righteous are delivered from trouble, and it comes to the wicked instead* Prov 11:8
  - *Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape* Luke 21:36

## 5) The church is the 24 Elders

Rev 19:6-8

### a) The 24 Elders

The truth is no one knows exactly who the 24 Elders are, because they are never actually named. But I believe the Bible does give us a very clear indication of who they are – **The Church**

#### 1) Where is the Church seated? On thrones...

Rev 4:4

- To sit on a throne is a seat of power and authority - we are told that we will reign with Christ. 2 Tim 2:12, Rev 20:4-6, Dan 7:27, 1 Cor 6:2
- Ephesians even mentions that we are seated with him in heavenly places. Eph 2:6-7
- The overcoming, victorious, church is promised to sit on thrones... Rev 3:21
- The disciples were the very first members of the Church – the Bride of Christ. Jesus said to them... Matt 19:28

#### 2) What are the 24 Elders wearing?

Rev 4:4

##### i. Dressed in White

- Bride of Christ is clothed in fine, bright, clean linen, and that linen is described as *“the righteous acts of the saints”* Rev 19:14
- A white robe, is symbolic of being clothed in the righteousness of Christ. Rev 3:4-5

##### ii. Wearing gold crowns

- As you can see, they are seated on thrones, dressed in white robes, **wearing crowns**
  - Believers are promised is the crown of life. James 1:12, Rev 2:10
  - Crown of Righteousness 2 Tim 4:8
  - Crown of Glory 1 Pet 5:4
- **Wearing a Victors crown**, Grk ‘*Stephanos*’ victors crown Rev 2:10, Rev 3:11
- **Jesus wore a Kingly crown ‘Diadema’** Kingly crown Rev 19:12
- **Bema Seat of Christ**
  - The Judgement seat of Christ
  - This seat is not for sin, but for rewards Rom 14:10-12, 2 Cor 5:10
  - Athletes are rewarded for running the race 1 Cor 9:24-27

#### 3) Only King/Priests sat on thrones

- Jesus as **King / Priest & Prophet**
- Melchizedek was both **King & Priest** Heb :1, Ps 110:4
- We are also called **kings & priests** to our God Rev 1:6, 1 Pet 2:9, Rev 5:10, 1 Pet 2:9

#### 4) What are the 24 Elders doing? They are worshiping

Rev 5:8-14

- Whoever these elders are, one of the things you notice is that they are constantly entering into worship. Rev 4:11, Rev 5:9-10, Rev 5:13, Rev 19:6
- Only the church (redeemed) can sing these words: *“redeemed us to God by Your blood”* and *“made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth”*