



The Tribulation, Part One

WEEK 4 DISCUSSION GUIDE

OVERVIEW

In this fourth message of our series entitled, ***Is This The End?***, we'll look at what the Apostle John teaches about the first 3 ½ years of the Tribulation. Next week, we will discuss the second 3 ½ years known as the Great Tribulation.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Believers will not be on earth during the Tribulation. They will be in heaven. Immediately after the Rapture, believers will experience what Paul calls the **Judgment Seat of Christ**. **2 Corinthians 5:10** says, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.” When we arrive in Heaven, we are judged by Christ for all our deeds, and we will be rewarded for everything righteous we’ve done. Our deeds do not determine if we go to heaven—our salvation alone saves us; Our deeds only determine the rewards we receive in heaven. We must stand and have our works tested before we are presented to Jesus as His Bride.

- How does this truth influence your motivation for serving Christ?
- Why should our motivation to do good deeds come from our love for Christ and nothing else?



There are **Three Storylines of the Tribulation**:

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb, The Throne of Heaven, and The Earth

1. The first storyline is the Church enjoying the **Marriage Supper of the Lamb** in Heaven. After the **Judgment Seat of Christ**, we move directly into the **Marriage Supper of the Lamb** (Revelation 19:7-8). This seven-year feast takes place in Heaven with Christ and Believers and coincides timewise with the seven-year Tribulation on Earth. The marriage feast begins with Jesus coming for us at the Rapture and culminates with the Groom (Jesus) taking His Bride (the Church) to our

home at His Second Coming. Our new home is back here on the earth, and our role is to rule and reign with Him during the 1,000-year Millennial Kingdom.

- Jesus is looking for a radiant Bride. How should we live, knowing that the Marriage Supper of the Lamb is coming?

2. The second storyline is **The Throne of Heaven**. Nothing happens on earth that is not established first in Heaven. In Revelation chapters 6-18, we see three cycles of seven judgments unleashed from the Throne of Heaven: the Seven Seals, the Seven Trumpets, and the Seven Bowls. Each round of judgments is more intense and severe than the previous. The Seven Seals take place in the first 3 ½ years of the Tribulation while the Trumpets and Bowls take place in the second 3 ½ years. The first four seals are illustrated as four horsemen riding four different horses. These are four demonic spirits no longer restrained by the Holy Spirit and the Church.
 - Read Revelation 6 and Revelation 8:1-5 aloud to hear the details of the Seven Seals. What did you learn about the Tribulation that you didn't know before?
3. The third storyline is **The Earth**, and it has four main components: **The 144,000, The Two Witnesses, The Two Beasts, and The Abomination of Desolation**. **The 144,000** are a remnant of Jews (12,000 from each of the twelve tribes of Israel). People from all around the world are getting saved during the Tribulation, but God is gathering and protecting 144,000 Jews during the first 3 ½ years.

Throughout the first half of the Tribulation, the **Two Witnesses** are prophesying against the sins of man. Like Elijah and Moses, these witnesses have the power to keep rain from the earth and to turn water into blood.

The **Two Beasts** are the **Antichrist** and the **False Prophet**. The Antichrist will begin his rule immediately after the Rapture by signing a peace agreement with Israel, bringing the long sought peace to the Middle East (Daniel 9:27). In Revelation 13:3, the Antichrist receives a near-fatal wound. This is when the second Beast is introduced, which is the False Prophet. The False Prophet heals the wound and prompts the entire world to worship the Antichrist. During the first 3½ years of the Tribulation, the Temple is rebuilt in Israel because of relative peace. Sacrificial ceremonies begin again.

The **Abomination of Desolation** occurs right in the middle of the Tribulation when the Antichrist goes into the innermost part of the newly-built Temple (the Holiest of Holies) to the Throne of God and sits on the throne and proclaims himself to be God. At that time, the Antichrist turns on Israel and the 144,000 Jews are martyred.

LIFE CHALLENGE

Read Revelation chapters 4-11 for more details about the events discussed in this message.

PRAYER REQUESTS & CLOSE IN PRAYER