



# The Antichrist and the Tribulation

A unique fascination exists with predicting the future. People enjoy exploring the unknown. We watch the weather report, for example, because we want to know what the forecast will be for the next few days. People also want to understand prophetic events. An ever-growing interest in psychics and New Age philosophers is often a manifestation of this fascination. Fortunately, God has revealed in the Bible the things that are to come to pass. Thus, our curiosity can be satisfied, and our hope in God strengthened.



The Bible tells us clearly what will happen as our present world comes to an end. Following the Rapture of the church, many Jews will receive Christ as Messiah and will begin to evangelize unbelievers from other nations. At the same time, many terrible and troubling events will occur on earth. The Antichrist, a horrendously evil dictator, will run rampant during this period, breaking promises and causing pain and persecution especially toward national Israel. In fact, the persecution faced by Jews during this time will be worse than the Holocaust or any other destruction they have known (Daniel 12:1). This is truly the “Great Tribulation,” and the devil is behind all this turmoil.

Fortunately, in the end, God’s goodness triumphs over evil. The work of the enemy is put to an end, and Christians will spend eternity in fellowship with Christ.

## Overview

Following the Rapture, a man who will be the culmination of all that is evil will gain worldwide control. He is referred to as the Antichrist in 1 John 2:18. He is also referred to as *The Man of Sin* (2 Thessalonians 2:3), *The Beast* (Revelation 13:1-4), *The Little Horn* (Daniel 7:8;8:9), *The Son of Perdition* (2 Thessalonians 2:3),

*The Wicked One* (2 Thessalonians 2:8) and *The Willful King* (Daniel 11:36-45).

During his earthly reign, the Antichrist will convince most of the world’s people that he has all the answers for their economic and political future. People will grant him almost godlike admiration. His actions eventually demonstrate his opposition to anything godly and any connection to Jesus.

For the remainder of the Tribulation, a time of great suffering will exist on the earth. Part of the suffering will be caused by the Antichrist himself. Another part of the suffering will come as God releases grievous judgments on those who have rejected His mercy and grace. At the end of the Tribulation, Christ and the armies of heaven will defeat the Antichrist and his army in the Battle of Armageddon.

# DECLARATION OF FAITH

*We believe that the second coming of Christ is personal and imminent; that He will descend from heaven in the clouds of glory with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God;*



## AN EVIL KINGDOM ESTABLISHED

Following the return of Christ and the rapture of believers, the Antichrist will come into power on earth (2 Thessalonians 2:1-9). He will rule a kingdom similar in structure to the ancient Roman Empire. Eventually, he will gain control of the entire earth. He will blaspheme and slander God's name and severely persecute believers (Revelation 13:6-7). No one will be able to buy or sell without his mark which will be required on either the right hand or forehead (Revelation 13:16-18). However, those who receive the Mark of the Beast will later be cursed with painful sores (Revelation 16:2). They will also be cut off from any possibility of salvation through Jesus Christ and will ultimately be tormented in the Lake of Fire forever (Revelation 14:9-11).

## TRUE MOTIVES EXPOSED

There will be much suffering on earth during the Tribulation. Those who accept Christ during this time of trouble will be severely persecuted by the Antichrist, and many will be martyred for their faith (Revelation 20:4). Jewish people will face worse aggression than ever before during the Antichrist's reign of terror (Daniel 12:1).

The worst suffering experienced during the Tribulation, however, will be for those who have firmly rejected Jesus Christ. This punishment will come from God Himself and will include every kind of natural disaster: fires, earthquakes, plagues and catastrophic natural disturbances such as the ocean turning to blood, and extended periods of darkness. Unprecedented political, social and economic

- Aimee Semple McPherson,  
Founder ICFG

upheaval will also characterize this period. There will be wars and death that will far exceed anything in human history. (See Tribulation chart.) No person who truly understands what the Tribulation will be like would want to live on earth during those days. In fact, Revelation 9:6 tells us that it will be so bad and excruciatingly painful that some will wish to die but will be unable to do so. Matthew 24:21-22 explains that, unless the days of torment be shortened by a merciful God, no one would survive.

## JUSTICE OF GOD REVEALED

At the end of this seven year period, the Antichrist and his armies will gather together to make war against Israel. Christ, however, will intervene, coming to the aid of His people with the armies of heaven. The soldiers of the Antichrist will be annihilated, and the Beast and his evil cohort, the False Prophet, will be cast into the Lake of Fire (Revelation 19:19-21). Satan will then be bound and thrown into the Abyss for a period of 1,000 years (Revelation 20:1-3). During this millennium, people on the earth will experience unprecedented peace and prosperity (Isaiah 65:21-25).

## BEWARE OF A SELFISH SPIRIT

In 1 John 4:3 we are told that the spirit of Antichrist is present in the world today. This spirit is not yet fully what it will be during the Tribulation, but it is evident in the basic sin nature of people. Simply stated, the spirit of Antichrist is that selfish spirit which seeks to dethrone God by elevating a person to God's level (Revelation 13:8).

The spirit of Antichrist first appeared when Adam and Eve placed their desire above God's instruction in the Garden of Eden. Satan told Eve that she could become as God (Genesis 3:5). Anytime we seek to be ruler of our own lives, we are allowing the spirit of Antichrist to rule. In contrast, when we allow Jesus Christ to rule in our lives, we displace our natural tendency to sin and overrule the spirit of Antichrist.



# Personal Response

Although the Antichrist is an actual person who will become an oppressive world dictator, the potential has always existed in every human being to rebel against God. The Antichrist takes that rebellion to an extremely hideous degree; however, if we are not careful, our natural tendency to live apart from God will lead us into the same rebellion. 1 John 2:15-19; 22 warns us to guard against the same worldly attitude that results in people turning against God and following the Antichrist. The spirit of Antichrist is a matter of the human heart. After careful personal reflection, discuss the following questions in pairs or small groups.

- How do we sometimes try to be God?
- How do we occasionally adore others as if they were God?
- How do you think the Antichrist (Beast) will get others to worship him as God? (See Revelation 13:1-8)



## HEART PERSPECTIVE

It is thrilling to think of the Second Coming as a triumphant event in two stages by which Jesus rescues His people and appears in all the royal majesty of heaven to fill the whole earth with His righteousness and glory.

However, in almost every part of the Bible where the Second Coming is mentioned there are also warnings to be ready when Jesus comes back. Jesus tells us in Luke 21:36, *“Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.”* This verse warns against spiritual lethargy and calls for alertness and readiness for His return. If our hearts truly belong to Jesus Christ and our lives are submitted to His Lordship, we will be prepared to meet Jesus when He comes again.

We must hold tightly to our message of hope in Christ. Jesus warned us that many would try to deceive people by appearing to have some truth, but they are not of God (Luke 21:8). Our message of truth is perhaps more important to share today than ever before. People are looking for hope, and we know the true way to lasting hope. If Jesus were to come today, we would be rescued from the difficulties of life, but we would also leave behind many unsaved friends and neighbors whom we might win if we had more time. Therefore, as long as we live on earth, we should share this truth and hope in order to take many with us into eternal life.



**FAITH SHARING**

## Lesson 14 Teaching Outline



# The Antichrist and the Tribulation

For this lesson, students will use pages 1-3 of the student guide.

### REFERENCE POINT (15 minutes)

Ask students to suggest reasons for increased interest in events surrounding the end of the world. Here are a few suggestions to begin your list:

- the desire to be prepared
- controlling personal destiny
- fascination with supernatural

Emphasize with the students that curiosity about and even knowledge about “end times” events will not adequately prepare people. The only way to be ready for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ is to know Him as Lord and Savior before He returns.

### OVERVIEW (10 MINUTES)

From the “Seven Years of Tribulation” chart write out individual events on a pieces of paper. Then put sticky tape or something that will help hold it to a chalkboard on the back. Give an equal amount of them to each student. Write three columns on the chalkboard: *1st Half of Tribulation, Middle of Tribulation, and 2nd Half of Tribulation*. Divide the class into two teams. A member from each team will start by putting his or her events under the proper heading. When that person is finished, another member of his or her team will do the same. The first team to get all their events located under the proper heading wins. The students should be allowed to use their lesson charts.

### INSIGHT (20 minutes)

Write each of the following questions on separate cards:

- What would you think of a person who did the kinds of things the Antichrist will do?
- Why will people follow the Antichrist and be loyal to him?
- Why will God’s ultimate judgment of sin be so extreme?

Present a brief (5-10 minutes) teaching based on the *Insight* section. Following your teaching, divide the class into three groups and provide one of the above mentioned question cards for each group. Ask each group to discuss its question using Bible verses to support its answers. Then, ask each group to report its observations to the class.

## TAKING IT HOME

### PERSONAL RESPONSE (Conclusion 15 minutes)

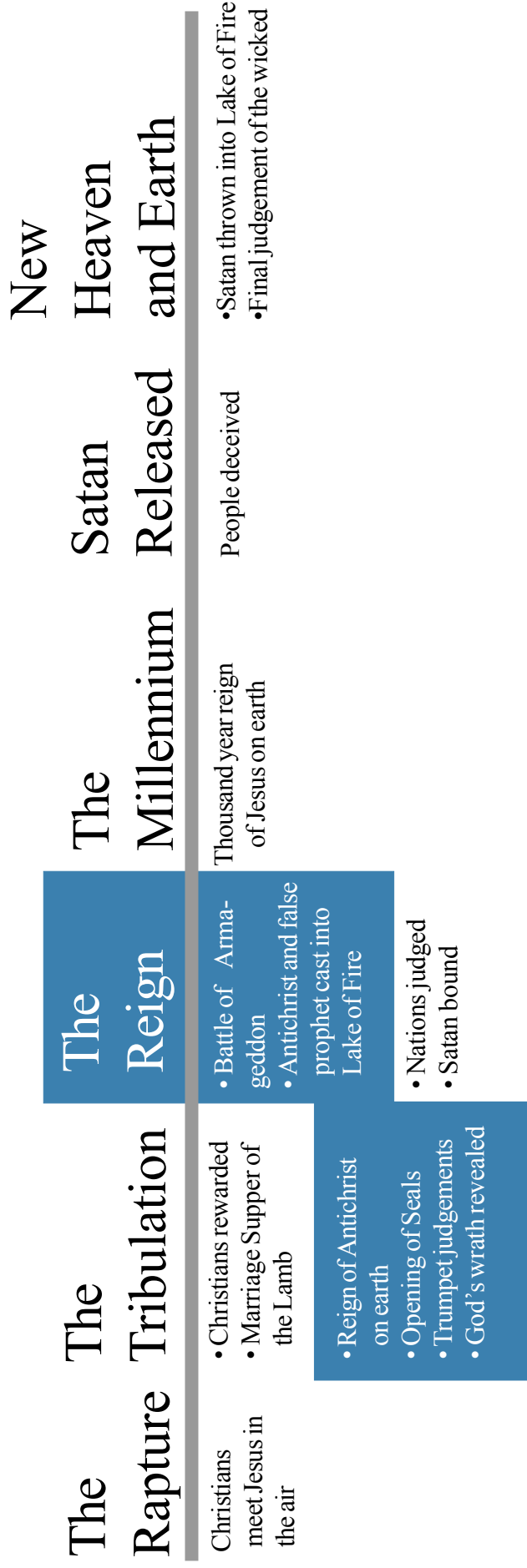
Divide the students into groups of two or three and have them answer the two questions from the *Personal Response* section of the lesson. Take time for them to report their answers back to the class.

### HEART PERSPECTIVE (Personal Devotions)

This section is for the purpose of encouraging the students with the glorious hope of Christ’s return. It might be used as a point of conversation with family and friends, or simply to uplift the students.

### FAITH SHARING (Follow-up)

While we longingly wait for the return of the Savior, let us remember that time is running out for us to do the work of the Lord. Therefore, we need to be diligent in our witness for Christ. The primary reason that God leaves us on this earth is that we might share His message of grace and love with others.



(The highlighted events are covered in this lesson.)

# SEVEN YEARS OF TRIBULATION

## FIRST HALF OF TRIBULATION

1<sup>st</sup> Seal—Rider on a White Horse, Conquest, Rev. 6:1-2  
Revived Roman Empire, Dan. 7:8; Rev. 13:1  
Antichrist comes into power, 2 Thess. 2:1-9  
Covenant between Israel & Antichrist  
2<sup>nd</sup> Seal—Rider on a Red Horse, War, Rev. 6:3-4  
3<sup>rd</sup> Seal—Rider on a Black Horse, Famine, Rev. 6:5-6  
4<sup>th</sup> Seal—Rider on a Pale Horse, Death, Rev. 6:7-8  
5<sup>th</sup> Seal—Prayer of Martyred Remnant, Rev. 6:9-11

## MIDDLE OF TRIBULATION

6<sup>th</sup> Seal—The Day of God's Wrath, Rev. 6:12-17  
Antichrist breaks covenant with Israel, Dan. 9:27  
Persecution of the Jews begins, Dan. 12:1, 11  
Interlude for protection of God's people, Rev. 7  
Remnant of Israel sealed  
Redeemed multitude of Gentiles

## SECOND HALF OF TRIBULATION

7<sup>th</sup> Seal—Introduction of 7 Trumpets, Rev. 8:1  
1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet—Trees Burnt, Rev. 8:7  
2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet—Seas Become Blood, Rev. 8:8-9  
3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpet—Fresh Water Becomes Bitter, Rev. 8:10-11  
4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet—Sun, Moon, Stars Smitten, Rev. 8:12-13  
5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet—Fallen Star & Plague of Locusts, Rev. 9:1-12  
6<sup>th</sup> Angel Loosed to Kill 1/3rd of All People, Rev. 9:13-21  
Interlude, Rev. 10:1-11:14  
Prophesying of the Two Witnesses  
Great Earthquake  
7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet—Opening of Temple in Heaven, Rev. 11:15-19

Antichrist receives fatal wound to head & recovers, Rev. 13:3,4  
Must worship Antichrist as God or be killed, Rev. 13:5-8  
Mark of the Beast, Rev. 13:16-18

## TOWARDS END OF TRIBULATION

7 Bowls of God's Wrath Poured Out from Temple in Heaven  
1<sup>st</sup> Bowl—Painful Sores, Rev. 16:1-2  
2<sup>nd</sup> Bowl—Sea Becomes Blood, Rev. 16:3  
3<sup>rd</sup> Bowl—Rivers Become Blood, Rev. 16:4-6  
4<sup>th</sup> Bowl—Scorching Heat, Rev. 16:8-9  
5<sup>th</sup> Bowl—Darkness, Rev. 16:10-11  
6<sup>th</sup> Bowl—Demons Draw Kings to Armageddon, Rev. 16:12-14  
7<sup>th</sup> Bowl—Catastrophic Disturbances in Nature, Rev. 16:17-21

Mystery Babylon destroyed by Antichrist, Rev. 17  
Commercial Babylon destroyed by God, Rev. 18