

What just happened? The Rapture of the Church

As if the world isn't spinning out of control enough already, something seemingly unbelievable just happened! Literally millions have just "disappeared" causing people to ask, "Where did they go? Are they dead or alive somewhere? Why did some disappear and not others? What is different about them?"

My best guess is that all kinds of "theories" and "explanations" are flying around. I'd bet some are suggesting "alien abductions" or something to do with Covid-19 or the vaccine. Who knows what will be dreamed up to explain the "unexplainable" - millions of people literally disappearing around the globe all at the exact same time.

The bottom line is this event cannot be explained in the natural. But it can be understood using the oldest textbook around, the Holy Bible.

My intention in writing this booklet is **so you will understand what has happened** and have a reasonable idea **what is going to happen in the days and years ahead. Just as what happened to me is plainly explained in the Bible, so are the events of the years ahead.**

I know that creating an exact chronological (Biblical) timeline for end-time events is not possible. Many Bible scholars disagree as to the exacting timing of the end-time events (when in the seven years each event occurs). However, the general order of the events is pretty much universally accepted.

1. I am alive, well, and am now happily living in heaven just as was promised in the Bible. So, don't worry about me and don't bother trying to "find" me. If you want to know more about the promises I believed, look in the Bible at three of the many verses that tell the story of the Rapture: John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:50-57; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. There are many more, but these will give you the basic idea¹.

The word "Rapture" does not appear in our English Bibles.

The New Testament was originally written in Greek. The word there is *harpazo*. When the Bible was translated from Greek to Latin, the word *harpazo* was translated as *rapturo*, a word that means “to seize, carry off by force, to claim for one’s self eagerly, to snatch out or away.” This is where we get the idea of the word Rapture.

2. **“Why was I taken to heaven but you were not?” is a legitimate question.** First of all, I assure you it wasn’t “about me.” I was no “better” person than anyone else. I wasn’t “chosen” to be spared the horribleness of the days ahead because of who I was or what I did or did not do in my life, WITH ONE EXCEPTION – **I accepted Jesus’ gift of love and grace knowingly and willingly before the day of the Rapture. Apparently, you did not or you would not be on earth reading this right now.** (There is still time for you to do it, but not much time. I’ll explain more about this later.)

The acceptance of Jesus’ gift has nothing to do with going to church, or being a good person or any of the other things people like to list as to why they should be going to heaven when they die. The basic fact is this: **God owns heaven and He alone decides who will live there, we don’t get to make the rules of entry. He wants people in Heaven who actually want to be with Him/them forever. We are free to accept His offer/gift or not.** He doesn’t want robots in heaven (those who He forced to love, respect, and obey Him). That is why what Jesus did on the cross is **a gift, an invitation of sorts.**

His requirement is simple, “believe in me” – what does this mean?

- a. The New Testament Greek word *pisteuo* (believe) means to “be convinced of something” or “give credence to something.” **We must be convinced that Jesus is the Son of God and that He died on a cross and came back to life on the 3rd day** (it is a historical fact, by the way). Either He is or He isn’t (the Son of God), either He did or He didn’t (die on the

cross and rise again).

- b. Being “convinced” of those two facts, however, is not enough. **You must accept or personally appropriate them as being true for you.** Note that we are not merely accepting as true that He died and arose, we are acknowledging that **He did it for us.** **In a substitutionary “instead of us” death, Jesus died in our place.** The punishment we deserve (for our sins) He suffered for us. **Christ saved us by dying for us. The third day He arose proving that, as God, He conquered both sin and death.**

To prove this let me offer the Bible verse James 2:19 that says, *“You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.”* So, you see the fact that He did it for you is important.

- c. The word pisteuo also has a further inherent meaning. Along with “be convinced of something” and “give credence to,” **it also means “trust.”** If we **believe** in the Biblical sense of the word, then **we are trusting Christ (alone) to save us from the wrath to come—** not a good life, church attendance, baptism, taking of the sacraments, or keeping of the commandments.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Note: in the Bible

Death = eternal separation from God

Life = eternally being with God and all His goodness

Here are three of the over 200 verses in the Bible that indicate that **salvation comes by faith in Jesus alone.**

Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace [unearned favor] you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

*John 3:16-18 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but **he who does not believe is condemned already,***

because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Romans 5:10 For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

So, which of these might apply to you?

1. You didn't (don't) believe in heaven and hell, or simply don't care about what might happen to you after you die. Perhaps you have said, "I'll take my chances."
2. Perhaps you do believe in heaven and hell but have thought, "I'm not a bad person. Actually, I'm a pretty good person, so I think I'll get into heaven when the time comes." This indicates faith in yourself to get into heaven not faith in Jesus (Who He is and what He did) to get you there.
3. Perhaps you go regularly to church and thought you were a "believer" so you are really confused now. See if any of these fits what is regularly taught in your church:
 - a. God wants all His people to be healthy and wealthy, if you are not, then the problem is with you - you better start giving more to the church.
 - b. God is more interested in social reform (how we treat each other) than anything else - so we all need to be "nice" people, "good" people, that's good enough.
 - c. We need to care so much about the planet, the animals, the trees, etc. that we are willing to allow others to suffer to protect it.
 - d. The Bible has been translated so many times that you can't trust it anymore, it is no longer valid. We use _____ (fill in the blank with something else).
 - e. God loves all people and will overlook our sins just because we can't help it - He knows it's part of our "sin nature."

If any of these fit, you now know why you are still here on earth, these simply don't fit the requirement God established for entrance into heaven. One good litmus test might be:

Is the pastor/teacher of your church still here? If yes, then get away from their teaching. If they were raptured but you weren't, perhaps you weren't paying attention or they believed one thing but taught another.

No matter what, so far, you were wrong, **you didn't place your trust in the true Jesus (alone) to save you, which explains why you are here and I am there.** It's as simple as that. You either trusted yourself, trusted in a false Jesus, or didn't think it necessary to trust anyone (that no wrath was really coming). I trusted Him ONLY. Again, **not about my life but rather my faith, hope, and trust in who Jesus is and what He did for me.**

Think and pray about these things as I attempt to explain what is coming up next.

If you have already been “left behind,” why should you care about what’s going to happen next?

1. **That wasn't your last chance.**
2. You should expect the next several years to be the **darkest hours in human history**. Make no mistake, although Satan and the coming Antichrist and False Prophet will be some of the instruments used to bring about the close of this age, **it is God, Himself, that is causing these most devastating things to occur in the upcoming years.**

In case you are wondering why God would do this, there are several reasons for the events that will occur (you don't have to agree with these, they just “are”):

1. To prepare Israel (Jews) for their Messiah
2. To punish unbelieving sinners
3. To prove His (God) power
4. To portray Satan's true character
5. **To provide salvation:** God will graciously use the Tribulation period to drive people to Himself in repentance and trust. You see, **He still wants you.** A huge number of people will be saved during the next seven years².

Humans can bow their backs and stiffen their necks against God as if they have the “right” to do so, but it simply isn't true. The one true God of the universe is the creator and sustainer of all that exists. He hates sin and will not allow it to go unpunished indefinitely. But, **by His grace and mercy, He provided a way for it to be paid for on the cross nearly 2000 years ago.** Accept it or don't - each person must decide for themselves.

Proverb 1:7 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, But fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Matthew 10:28 And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

As you read these pages, now would be a very good time to consider **where you will go when it is all “over.”** There is still time (although not much) for you to accept the loving and gracious gift of salvation offered to you by Jesus.

Continued rejection of Him and His gift is the only unforgivable sin. It is important for you to understand that **the longer you “resist” the more difficult it will be to agree and accept.**

But, **once you have accepted, you will be saved** – perhaps by death during the years ahead or perhaps you will survive until Jesus returns to the earth seven years from now. Either way, **you will be secured for eternity (IF you put your faith, trust, and hope in His hands NOW).**

Should you decide to continue in unbelief and rejection you will, most likely, scoff at what I have left for you here and stop reading. **What you experience in the next seven years will be child’s play compared to an eternity in hell.** Know that this breaks my heart, for I still love you and always will.

So, what will happen next? The Seven-Year Tribulation Period

There are at least two major events that may or may not have already happened. I am writing about them here because even though they may have already happened, the swiftness of the event succession may be so quick that I don't have time to change this writing before I leave the earth. If they have already occurred, just know that they were foretold in the Bible thousands of years ago with stunning accuracy. By knowing that and seeing it happen in your lifetime, I hope it will give you additional confidence of the truth of other passages in the Bible about the future.

1. A total destruction of the City of Damascus³, Syria.
2. A huge invasion attempt⁴ against Israel lead primarily by Russia, Turkey, and Iran. This invasion attempt will be thwarted by God, Himself, using largely the power of nature that He alone controls.

As I said, one or both of these events may have already happened. If they have, you can be sure that the true Christian Believers will be leaving to go to heaven if we have not already gone.

Again, I hope that you will find it **in your heart to listen to the Spirit of God** who continues to invite you to join Believers and be saved from an eternity in hell. Doing so now won't get you to heaven until you die (sorry, that ship has sailed) but it will assure you that you will be saved from the horrors of hell for all eternity (as they say in the song, "and that's a long, long time").

As I was while we were both on the earth, I will be anxiously hoping to see you again (in heaven). If you are in hell, that won't happen. We will never see each other again.

Removal of the Restrainer⁵

Until now, the “man of lawlessness” (the Antichrist, Satan’s CEO) has been kept in secret and has been partially restrained from doing what he wants to do (trust me, it’s not good!). He has been restrained by the Holy Spirit who has been “resident” in the hearts of Believers (like me) until now. But now the Believers have left the earth and are safely in heaven. The Holy Spirit has not departed from the earth (not possible as He is omnipresent) but, He purposely steps aside for seven years to allow Satan to do as he wishes with the earth. The result of His “stepping aside” is a dramatic increase in evil around the world. Brace yourself, it is about to get much, much worse.

Who are the main players in the final days?

The Antichrist (the man of lawlessness) - Satan’s CEO

More than 100 passages of the Bible describe the origin, nationality, character, career, conquest and doom of the **final world ruler** known as **the Antichrist**. Clearly God wants you to know something about the coming prince of darkness. The word Antichrist refers both to **an individual (an actual human being) and to the system he represents**. He is the archenemy and ultimate opponent of Jesus Christ. **He will be empowered by Satan himself**. He will mimic the ministry of the true Son of God in many ways.

He will come “on the scene” in the world at a time of ultimate chaos (no doubt some of which is a result of the Rapture of the Church with millions of believing Christians “disappearing” all at the same time). Add to this wars, civil unrest, pandemics, fires, massive earthquakes, other natural disasters, food shortages, and much more. I believe I just described the world today... He will be viewed by the world as a man of vision and charisma and will be seen as the most incredible leader the world has ever known. He will be very attractive in all ways.

One description I found while writing this booklet says:

“The world will go delirious with delight at his manifestation. He will be the seeming answer to all its needs. He will be filled with all the fullness of Satan. Handsome, with a charming, rakish, devil-may-care personality, a genius, superbly at home in all the scientific disciplines, brave as a lion with an air of mystery about him to tease the imagination or to chill the blood as occasion may serve, a brilliant conversationalist in a score of tongues (languages), a soul-captivating orator, he will be the idol of all mankind.”

---John Phillips

Have you ever seen or known any person who could fill all those descriptions? I haven't. So, when he appears and makes himself known to the world, **understand that the Tribulation (seven years of horror) is about to begin.**

According to the Bible, here are some of his attributes:

- He will be a “gentile” – a non-Jewish person.
- He will mesmerize the world with his words.
- He will rise from obscurity, initially seen by the world as a great “peacemaker.”
- He will establish a one-world economy.
- He will rule the world.
- He will claim to be God.
- Near the middle of the Tribulation period, he will be assassinated or violently killed but will be raised back to life.
- The whole world will be amazed and willingly follow after him.
- He will be indwelt, controlled, and energized by Satan.
- He will mercilessly pursue and persecute the Jewish people.
- He will be promoted by a second “beast” (called the False Prophet) who will lead the world in worship of him.
- By the middle of the seven-year period most of the people of the world will be so deceived by him that they will pledge absolute loyalty to him and will gladly show their loyalty by

getting a special “mark” (probably somewhat like a tattoo or brand) on their forehead or right hand. He does not “force” this mark on people, no one will hold you down and make you take it. If you refuse, however, he will see it as an indication of disloyalty to him. As punishment, you will not be able to buy or sell things - food, for example and you may be beheaded. See more about this on page 20.

The False Prophet

The Bible also describes another man (again a human) who will rise to power in the Tribulation period. He will serve as the lieutenant for the Antichrist, preparing the way and catapulting him to power and unparalleled success. **He will be able to perform incredible miracles, signs and wonders with power supplied by Satan.** Using these “wonders,” the false prophet will convince the world that the Antichrist is the leader they’ve been looking for –“the man with the plan to solve all the world’s problems.”

According to the Bible, here are some things to watch for:

- He will bring down fire from heaven and perform other miracles.
- He will erect an image of the Antichrist for all the world to worship (in the Bible this is called the abomination of desolation. It will be placed in the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem). All people will be required to bow down to it or die. He will give “life” to the image of the Antichrist.
- He will raise the Antichrist from the dead (at least it will appear that it happens, we really can’t be sure what actually happens here because he will be a master of deception).
- He will control world commerce on behalf of the Antichrist requiring everyone to take the “mark of the beast” in order to buy food and other necessities.

Conclusion

The two “beasts” (Antichrist and False Prophet) will work together to rule the final world empire. They will be energized by Satan, forming an unholy trinity with him that will deceive the world.

They will begin with part of the world, but will continue to gain more and more control as the Tribulation period progresses.

Do not fear, for the Lord Jesus will return to reclaim title deed to the earth at the end of the seven-year period, and He will claim as His own those who love Him.

The Beginning of the Tribulation (7 years total)

- 1. Right now, the world is, no doubt, chaotic, dangerous and frightening.** Most likely the Rapture has occurred, and other calamities (war and the fear of nuclear disaster, global financial issues, unemployment, high food and other prices, pandemics, etc.) exist as well. People are turning against one another, even within families, friends and neighbors, with their own governments perpetuating the problems.
- 2. During this chaos, the Antichrist and False Prophet will emerge and rise to power (remember, both humans) – the power to rule over you will be eagerly given to them** by the frightened people of the world.
- 3. The Antichrist will affirm, sign or strengthen a middle-east peace treaty with Israel.** This treaty (or treaties) will usher in a **temporary peace for the Middle East.** No doubt, the Israelis will see it as a way to protect themselves.

The signing (or affirming) of the peace treaty could happen very soon after the Rapture or it could be several days, weeks, months or even a few years. During this time, it won't be easy or pleasant to live.

It is the signing (or affirmation) of a covenant of peace with/for the nation of Israel that inaugurates the Tribulation period and **sets the end-time clock in motion.**

Remember that the Tribulation period will last for exactly 7 years from the date of signing of that treaty.

For those who have been “left behind” but have since put their faith and hope in Jesus Christ, I hope this is somewhat encouraging – although it will be very bad, **it won't last forever.**

- 4. A new Jewish temple will be constructed on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem** and the Jews will get the right to once again offer sacrifices there. It is likely that the “Ezekiel 38 War” has happened (see page 8, item 2).

Evidence of this is that the nations included in the “Ezekiel 38 War” are where the primary radical Muslim groups now exist. It is likely that the existing Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa Mosque will need to be removed from the Temple Mount in Jerusalem to allow for the building of this (3rd) Jewish Temple there. I doubt that removal of these buildings would be allowed by “radical Muslims” if they are still powerful in the middle east.

- 5. A 10-nation confederation will emerge out of a united “Roman Empire” (predominately Europe) to govern a large part of the world. This will be headed up by the Antichrist.**

What's Next? Seven Seal Judgements --

Revelation Chapter 6; 8:1

Most Bible prophecy teachers agree that the seven seals are opened during the first half of the Tribulation (first 3½ years after the signing/extension of the peace treaty/protection agreement between the Antichrist and Israel).

Just before the four “horsemen” appear in Revelation 6, John (the author and Apostle) sees Jesus taking possession of the title deed to earth in Revelation Chapter 5. **The Bible says that Satan is now the god of this world. The Book of Revelation is the story of Jesus - as both God and a sinless representative of mankind - reclaiming title deed to this world through His death on the cross.**

The title deed is a rolled-up scroll sealed by seven drops of wax. As Jesus begins to break each of the wax seals, events on earth begin to happen.

The first seals are often referred to as **the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse**. The term “Apocalypse” means “revelation; a disclosure or revelation of great knowledge.”

The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse

Seal #1: White horse⁶ – conquest

Note that the rider of this horse has a bow but no arrows. It appears that his “conquests” are by diplomacy and negotiation of a sort rather than outright war but it proves to be just as deadly to mankind.

Seal #2: Red horse⁷ – war/conflict on earth

Red equals blood and blood equals war. This indicates that **a great war or wars will occur all over the earth.**

This represents war, strife, and civil upheaval. The pseudo “peace” felt by the first horseman will be swiftly shattered by the war of the rider of the second horse. It is not told how long the period of time is between the appearance of each “horseman.”

Seal #3: Black horse⁸ – famine

The black horse represents **famine**. Balances (or scales) reveal scarcity. This indicates that following (or during, or as a result of) the great war(s) of the red horse, **food and other necessities will become quite scarce**. This is not uncommon during and after a great war. A “denarius” was equal to a day’s wages at that time and the quart of wheat or three quarts of barley was just enough to feed one person, let alone a family. **You should expect hyper-inflation, food prices will skyrocket so high that it will take everything you can earn in a day just to buy enough food for yourself for that day - if you can find anything to buy that is.** The world will writhe in the clutches of stabbing hunger. The global economic collapse and food shortage will set the stage for the Antichrist to move into position and begin seizing control of the world economy.

Seal #4: Pale horse⁹ – widespread death on earth

This fourth and final horseman is named Death (Thanatos). He is the only one of the four that is given a name. The word “pale” is the Greek word for “green.” This is the ashen look of dead bodies without blood.

This fourth horseman will use four means to wreak his havoc: **war, famine, disease and wild beasts**. The first three of these are clearly understood. The last, wild beasts, may be simply animals who are hungry because their own food supply is shrinking or it may mean something else entirely, like a plague. The bottom line is that **1/4th of the world’s population will be killed**. One fourth of today’s population is nearly two billion people - all at one time. Where could all these people possibly be buried? Who will bury them?

Seal #5: The Cry of the Martyrs¹⁰

The “souls” mentioned here are the Old Testament saints and believers who are killed during the Tribulation period (this could be you). They cry out with a loud voice, *“How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our*

blood on those who dwell on the earth?" The Lord says, *"Wait until the full number of martyrs is completed."* This is chilling, isn't it? What He is saying is that there are **more to be martyred**. Then, He will get vengeance. The Tribulation martyrs and Old Testament Saints are given long, flowing robes and told to *"Rest a little while longer."* They are rewarded and honored for dying the ultimate death.

Seal #6: A Great Earthquake¹¹

Every part of society is affected but look at the human reaction: The greatest prayer meeting that the world has ever seen commences. **You would think that men and women would finally cry out to God. Instead, they pray to the rocks. I so hope you aren't in this group!**

What's the result of all this? Do men turn to God? No! It just makes their hearts harder! There is a lesson here. **The more often you say "no" to Jesus, the harder it is to ever say "yes."** **Saying "no, no, no" to God hardens your heart like a stone.** Read the stories of Pharaoh in Exodus 7-11. Think of the men and women who listened to Noah's preaching for 125 years, never repented, and died in the flood - Genesis 6-7. **Be very careful – if you haven't already accepted Jesus' gift of grace by this time in history, it may soon be too late.**

Seal #7: 30 minutes of silence in heaven¹²

Why is heaven silenced? Perhaps, because those who are there just got a glimpse of what is to come next and it is taking their breath away. This is speculation as we are not told in the Scriptures why this occurred.

Seven Trumpets of Judgement

First Trumpet: Vegetation Struck¹³

Bloody hail and fire will **destroy one-third of the earth's vegetation**. This include the food supply and plants that create oxygen needed for life.

Second Trumpet: The Seas Struck¹⁴

A huge fireball will come from heaven and **one-third of the oceans will be polluted (like blood). One third of the living sea creatures will die and a third of the ships will be destroyed.**

Third Trumpet: The Waters Struck¹⁵

A great star from heaven falls **contaminating one-third of the earth's fresh water supply. Many people will die.**

Fourth Trumpet: The Heavens Struck¹⁶

One-third of the sun, moon, and stars will be darkened – this will cause all kinds of chaos including crop failures, tidal issues, etc.

Fifth Trumpet: The Locusts from the Bottomless Pit¹⁷

This is a **demonic invasion** to possess and torment (only) those on the earth **who refuse to believe in and worship the true God of the universe and His Son, Jesus.** Apparently, believers will be spared this torment.

Sixth Trumpet: The Angels from the Euphrates¹⁸

This is likely a demonic army invasion of 200 million that **will kill one-third of remaining mankind.**

Seventh Trumpet: Announcement of Christ's Reign¹⁹

Revelation 11:15

RECAP: Immediately before and during approximately the first half of the 7 years of tribulation you should expect:

1. The total destruction of Damascus, Syria³. (Isaiah 17:1)
2. "Gog" and his allies will invade Israel⁴. The "Gog" coalition will be supernaturally decimated by God. "Gog" is an ancient name of a person who is the ruler of what is probably now modern Russia and nations that were the former Soviet Union: Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan. Afghanistan and others (perhaps Egypt, Sudan and Libya) could also be part of this Magog territory. Included in the coalition is Iran, Turkey and others. This is known as the "Ezekiel 38 War."

3. The Seven Seal Judgements (previously mentioned) will occur.
4. 144,000 Jewish believers will begin their evangelistic ministry – they will recognize Jesus as their awaited Messiah and will begin to evangelize other Jews. (Revelation 14:1)
5. God will supernaturally place “two witnesses²⁰” in front of the newly built Jewish Temple to begin their 3½ year ministry. For the 3½ years they are there no one will be able to hurt them or stop them from telling about the true God. They will have great power including the power to stop rain, turn water into blood and strike the earth with every kind of plague, as often as they like. (Revelation 11:3-13)

Midpoint of the Tribulation (at 3½ year point)

1. The Antichrist will break the covenant with Israel and invade it. (Daniel 9:27)
2. He will begin to consolidate his empire by plundering Egypt, Sudan and Libya, whose armies have just been destroyed by God in Israel (see #2 on page 7).
3. While in North Africa, the Antichrist will hear disturbing news of insurrection in Israel and will immediately return there to destroy and annihilate many.
4. The Antichrist will set up the “abomination of desolation” in the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem. The “abomination of desolation” referred to here is a statue or image of the Antichrist so that he may be worshiped in the place of God.
5. Sometime during these events, the Antichrist will be violently killed, possibly as a result of a war or assassination.
6. The Antichrist will be miraculously raised from the dead to the amazement of the whole world.
7. Satan will be cast down from heaven and will begin to war against Israel. The chief means he will use to persecute Israel is the Antichrist and False Prophet.

8. The faithful Jewish remnant of Israel (approximately 1/3rd of the Jewish residents of Jerusalem) will flee, possibly to Petra in Jordan, where God will protect them for the remaining 3½ years of the Tribulation.
9. After rising from the dead, the Antichrist will gain political control over “the 10 Kings” of the reunited Roman Empire (Europe). Three of these kings will be killed by the Antichrist, the other seven will submit to him.
10. The Antichrist and the 10 kings will destroy the religious systems of the world and set up their political, religious, and economic capital in the City of Babylon.

Now, on to the 2nd half of the 7-Year Tribulation

1. The Antichrist blasphemes God, and the False Prophet performs great signs and wonders and promotes worship of the Antichrist.
2. The **“Mark of the Beast”²¹** (The name or “number” of the Antichrist’s name which is 666) will be introduced and enforced by the False Prophet.
 - The word “mark” in Greek (charagma) means “a mark or stamp engraved, etched, branded, cut, imprinted” such as a tattoo or branding. **It is not medical (not a vaccine) or something that you would accept for any purpose other than to show allegiance to the Antichrist.** It will be used to control commerce to some extent, but you won’t get it simply for that purpose. Note that when people were saying that the Covid vaccine was the “mark of the beast” - that simply wasn’t true - according to the Bible. That idea failed on three counts: (1) in 2020/21 we were not in the middle of the Tribulation period; (2) The Covid vaccine was not open and visible, people couldn’t tell if you had gotten it by looking at your forehead or hand; (3) If you got the vaccine you did it for medical purposes, not to show allegiance to the Antichrist (who was not even revealed yet, hence no way to “show loyalty” to him). I am telling

you this so that you will know how to discern what is or is not the “mark” as other things such as the 2020/21 vaccine will most likely come along.

- Accepting the mark of the Beast will show your **allegiance to the Antichrist** over Jesus Christ. **It will not be possible to be neutral or undecided. You will be required to chose one or the other.**
 - Those who accept it will mark their everlasting doom as **it is an unpardonable/irreversible sin.**
 - **If you refuse the mark (because you have accepted Jesus’ offer of salvation) you may be killed by the False Prophet (beheaded) but will go to heaven immediately upon death.** (Revelation 20:4)
3. Totally energized by Satan, the Antichrist will dominate the world politically, religiously, and economically.
 4. Knowing he has only a short time left, Satan will intensify his relentless, merciless persecution of the Jewish people and the Gentile (non-Jewish) believers on the earth.
 5. The upcoming Bowl Judgements are unleashed throughout the final half of the Tribulation period.

The Seven Bowl Judgements of the Second Half of the Tribulation Period²² Often Called “The Great Tribulation”

These bowl judgments will be poured out in rapid succession.

First Bowl: Loathsome Sores²³

Note that the sores are only on those who worship the beast and take his mark, apparently only **those who have pledged themselves to Jesus will not suffer these sores.**

Second Bowl: The Sea Turns to Blood²⁴

The remainder of sea life now dies.

Third Bowl: The Rivers and Fresh Waters Turn to Blood²⁵

Fresh water becomes very scarce.

Fourth Bowl: Men Are Scorched²⁶

People will be scorched by the intensified heat of the sun but will still not acknowledge who God really is.

Fifth Bowl: Darkness and Pain²⁷

The expression “on the throne of the beast and his kingdom” in Revelation 16:10 means basically the earth. Remember that for now the Antichrist and False Prophet are the rulers of the world. They serve the Prince of Darkness, Satan. All of the earth becomes dark and people are in great pain.

Sixth Bowl: Euphrates Dried Up²⁸

This is preparation for the final Battle of Armageddon. Read Revelation 16:12-16.

The “frogs” coming out of the mouth of the dragon (Satan), the beast (the Antichrist), and the False Prophet are demons. They coerce the “whole world” to go to battle against Jesus and His saints.

Most Bible scholars agree that this is a specific place in Israel. Megiddo was an ancient city located on a plain in the southwest portion of the Valley of Jezreel or Esdraelon, the site of several significant ancient battles.

Seventh Bowl: The Earth Utterly Shaken²⁹

The largest earthquake ever will occur. **All the islands and mountains of the earth are no more.** A great hailstorm with the size of the hailstones being over 70 pounds each (33 kg) will occur.

The preceding bowl judgments will be poured out in rapid succession during the second half of the Tribulation Period.

Then³⁰:

1. The battle of Armageddon happens as Jesus returns to the earth and He will slay the armies gathered against Him. The “armies of heaven” will be with Him.
2. Birds will gather to feed on the massive carnage.
3. The Anti-Christ and the False Prophet are captured and thrown alive into the lake of fire.

4. The rest of the non-believers on the earth that are with them are killed.

After this, a 75-day period will exist until the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom. Many (good) things will happen during this transition period. Satan will be temporarily locked up, the Antichrist and False Prophet will be thrown in the Lake of Fire, and all non-believers will be killed. The earth will begin to heal itself (maybe all at once, maybe over a period of time, I don't know). The Bible says that "the desert will bloom, all animals will become vegetarians and won't kill each other for food or otherwise" etc.

When Jesus returns to claim the royal throne on the earth **I will be one of many with Him** and will be thrilled beyond measure to be reunited with you.

I hope and pray that you will be there – as only believers in Jesus Christ will survive this final battle, the others will die (physically) and eventually be put in the lake of fire forever.

If you happen to die (physically) during this awful period BUT have accepted Jesus' incredible gift of salvation, you will be resurrected into a new and glorious body (just like the one I now have), one that will never die again, nor have to experience pain, illness or suffering. Oh! And we won't grow old ever again! Yay!

Our lives will have just begun!

Onward to the Millennial Kingdom with Jesus as our rightful Lord and King!

Praise His Holy Name Forever!

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. 2 Corinthians 13:14

Last words of advice:

1. From Hebrews 4:7

***“Today, if you will hear His voice,
Do not harden your hearts.”***

2. Find others like yourself who will heed those words and live. You will need each other to survive. Find a few Bibles, read them together, pray, support one another. I promise it will be worth it!!

I will always love you ---

Salvation 101 – A quick review of “Bible-ese”

Salvation – the act of being saved or spared from the punishment we all earn by sinning, we are saved or spared from this punishment because **Jesus paid it for us through His death on the cross.** The Bible says, *“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* Romans 6:23.

It’s not that God just winks, looks the other way and says, “I forgive you.” – Justice requires that the debt be paid. Jesus, as the Son of God, took our place (yours and mine) on that cross. He paid your debt and my debt.

Death in the Bible is a separation and, in this sense, an eternal separation from God and all that is good. To be separated (absent) from all that is good is to be present in all that is evil (the opposite). The Bible calls it “the Lake of Fire.” You can do some research on that if you like but believe me NO ONE should WANT to be there.

Do you want to be spared an eternity in the Lake of Fire? Are you considering this right now? That’s great news! That means that regardless of what you may think or feel, the reality is that the Holy Spirit of God is, right now, speaking to your heart and mind encouraging you to consider this incredible gift of love. Otherwise, you would not even consider it. That’s an actual fact you can “take to the bank.”

Don’t believe me? Ask 12 people if they want to hear about what Jesus did on the cross and why He did it. Most will tell you, in one way or another, NO! If one or two say yes, you can be sure the Holy Spirit is wooing them (and you) right now!

So, what do you do now? Believe it, accept it, by faith. The Bible says, *“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name”* John 1:12

Salvation is by grace (an unearned favor or gift) through faith. Faith is the only condition or requirement.

Faith – the confidence or trust in someone or something. This is a conscience choice. We display acts of “faith” in our everyday lives, I’m sure you can think of some examples for yourself.

In the original Greek, four words are used to describe “faith” – their definitions are: to believe; to be persuaded of; to place confidence in;

to trust in the sense of relying upon. The important issue here is **the object of this “faith”** – that “object” must be Jesus (Yeshua is His Hebrew name, which means to save or to deliver).

What does **believe on His name** mean? It means to choose to believe that Jesus really is the Son of God and the Savior who paid the penalty for YOUR sin, that He acted as your substitute by satisfying the requirement of receiving your due punishment (... the wages of sin is spiritual death). Of course, this presupposes that you know you have committed many sins in your lifetime. Otherwise, you would have no need of Him at all.

You may have heard this discussed in the context of **repentance**. Let’s take a quick look at that word. The actual Biblical meaning of repentance is simply “to change one’s mind.” It doesn’t not include a requirement of sorrow (although you may feel sorrow, it is not a requirement). So, how does it apply here? We have to go back to the concept of the object of one’s faith. We must “change our mind/repent” about who the Savior is in order to be saved. Make sense? Think about what you thought about Jesus “before” and what you are considering right now? Are you “repenting” – changing your mind? Have recent events caused you to think and believe differently?

Consider the chart on the following page 

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son. John 3:16-18

So, you see, it is quite simple. Do you want to be saved? Then place your faith and trust in the One Who can save you – Jesus Christ – the Son of the living God, the One who died so YOU could live.

	Requirements of Salvation	Expectation of Discipleship
Acknowledgment of and belief in Jesus as the only one who can save you from the punishment of sin	Yes, you must believe it to be true and accept this "in your heart."	Yes, without this you are not "saved" – without salvation you cannot be a disciple.
Public Confession	No, you don't have to make a public "confession" of what you have done in your life or of your new thinking and faith. You don't have to go to the front of a church or anything like that. Salvation is by faith in the heart of a person by the work of the Holy Spirit.	There is an expectation that <u>after</u> you have been saved you will want to tell others what the Lord, Jesus did for YOU on the cross that horrible day nearly 2000 years ago. Your public confession of faith may help others come to the same conclusion. Many people are under the impression that they are "too bad" to be saved, that simply isn't true.
Sorrow or Shame	No, you don't have to feel deep sorrow or shame for your past. Again, although you may, you don't have to and failure to do so doesn't negate your salvation.	Once you are saved, it is likely that you will begin to feel deep shame and sorrow for the sins of your life. Use this as a starting point for rejoicing and thanksgiving, not as a place to remain "stuck" in the past. You are now free.
Beg for Forgiveness	No, you don't have to beg God to forgive and save you – He wants to! That's why you are even thinking about it right now – He is wooing you out of His great love for you!	Jesus voluntarily died for you knowing your sins. He did it of His own free will. Now is the time for great joy, peace, and thanksgiving. Now is the day to thank Him. Use your time wisely to do just that!
Surrender to His Lordship or Ruler-ship	No, oddly enough, He doesn't even require that you surrender to His Lordship, that is a requirement of discipleship, but not of salvation.	More than likely, you will want Him to surrender your life to His power and control, especially during times when you feel you have no control over yourself or your circumstances.
Water Baptism	No, you do not have to be water baptized to be saved. There are a few verses that seem to say this, but those verses must be taken in context, they were at a specific time when it was necessary so that others would know who was saved, it wasn't a requirement OF salvation.	Baptism is an outward or public statement of your faith and identification with Jesus as Lord. It is likely that you will <u>want</u> to be baptized and join with other believers in faith and fellowship. Do this as soon as it is practical if you want to make it clear to others of your great joy in the Lord.

Endnotes

All Scripture verses taken from the New King James Translation.

1 *First Thessalonians 4:17* "... Then, we who are still alive and remain on the earth **will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever.**" This is where I am, it is known as "**The Rapture of the Church**"

2 **The number of people "saved" during the Tribulation period will be immense.**

Revelation 9:7 *After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.*

Revelation 9:13 -14 *Then one of the elders asked me, "These in white robes—who are they, and where did they come from?" I answered, "Sir, you know." And he said, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation;*

3 *Isaiah 17:1* *The prophesy against Damascus. "Behold, Damascus will cease from being a city, and it will be a ruinous heap"*

4 *Ezekiel 38:18-23*

5 *Second Thessalonians 2:6-7* *And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; **only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way.***

Second Thessalonians 2: 9-10 *The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and **with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.***

6 Note: the "Lamb" is an expression used for Jesus Christ.

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.*

7 *Revelation 6:3-4:* *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.*

8 Revelation 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."

9 Revelation 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**.

10 Revelation 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**.

11 Revelation 6:12-17: I watched as he opened the **sixth seal**. There was **a great earthquake. The sun turned black... the whole moon turned blood red, and the stars in the sky fell to earth... The sky receded like a scroll, rolling up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place**. Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and every slave and every free man hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. **They called to the mountains and the 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 their wrath has come, and who can stand?"

12 Revelation 8:1 And when he had opened the **seventh seal**, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

13 Revelation 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.

14 Revelation 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.

15 Revelation 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. (poison)**

16 Revelation 8:12-13: 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.** And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, “Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!”

17 Revelation 9:1-12: 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.** 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. 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. In those days **men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them.** One woe is past. Behold, **still two more woes are coming after these things.**

18 Revelation 9:13-21 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.” **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. Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision: those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow; and the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone. By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed— by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.**

For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:

Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

19 Revelation 11:15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

20 Revelation 11:3 And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

21 Revelation 13:16-18: He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has [a]the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.

*Revelation 14:9-11: Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, **“If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.”***

*Revelation 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, **who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.***

*22 Revelation 15:1-8: Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having **the seven last plagues**, for in them the wrath of God is complete.*

And out of the temple came the seven angels having the seven plagues, clothed in pure bright linen, and having their chests girded with golden bands. Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever. The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and no one was able to enter the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.

Revelation 16:1 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."

23 Revelation 16:2 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.**

24 Revelation 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.**

25 Revelation 16:4 Then the third angel poured out his bowl on **the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood.**

26 Revelation 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.**

27 Revelation 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.

28 Revelation 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.

29 Revelation 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.

30 Revelation 19:11-21 Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And **the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.** Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written:

KING OF KINGS AND
LORD OF LORDS.

Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, **saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, "Come and gather together for the supper of the great God,** that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, both small and great."

And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.

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If the Rapture has already occurred at the time of your reading, I assume they are all in Heaven - I will thank them there.

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