



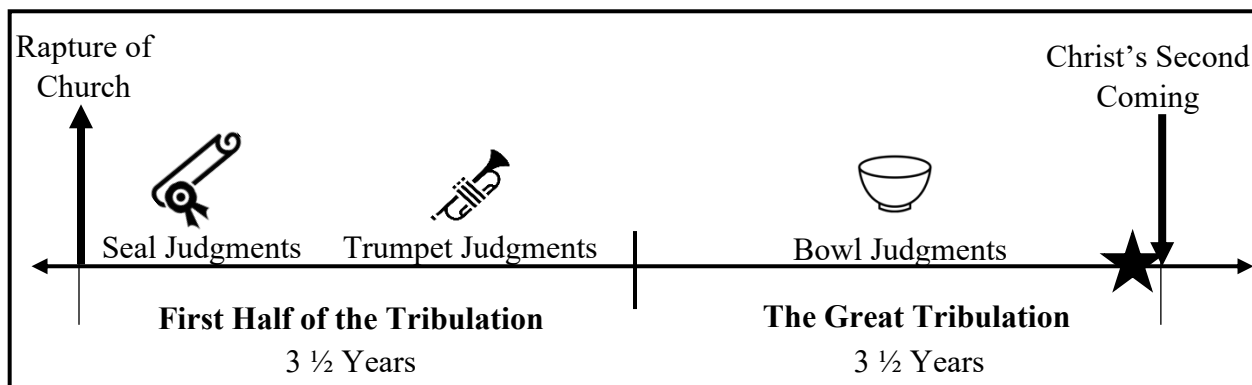
## Eschatology – A Study of the End Times

### Lesson 19: The Seven Year Tribulation Period, Part 6

#### Introduction

As we have seen in our study of the seal, trumpet, and bowl judgments during the seven-year tribulation period, suffering is going to increase. God is going to bring His judgement upon those who receive the mark of the beast during the great tribulation and instead of repenting these sinners will blaspheme God. All of this is going to come to a climax before the return of Christ in glory. In this lesson we are going to look at the end of the great tribulation and see what Scripture says about what is going to take place at this point in history.

#### Timeline of Tribulation Judgments



#### The Battle of Armageddon<sup>1</sup>

While the world of unbelievers during the great tribulation is in a state of painful agony because of the bowl judgements that God has unleashed (painful sores, water turned into blood, death of the sea creatures, people being scorched by the sun, total darkness, and a devastating earthquake), they will not repent (Rev. 16:9, 11). Instead, they will join in a military war campaign called Armageddon where millions of people will perish in the worst escalation ever to hit the earth.

<sup>1</sup> The following is adapted from *The End Times in Chronological Order* by Ron Rhodes.

Sixty miles north of Jerusalem is a hill country called Mount Megiddo. The word Armageddon (Har-Magedon) is a Hebrew word meaning “Mount Megiddo.” This is the location where Barak’s battle with the Canaanites took place (Judg. 4) and where Gideon defeated the Midianites (Judg. 7). This will be the site where the armies of the earth will gather together for a final battle against Jerusalem just before the second coming of Christ. Although the final battle will be a great slaughter of the world’s armies (Rev. 14:19–20), the campaign of Armageddon will actually occur in eight different phases. In this lesson we will look at the first four phases.

### ***Phase 1: The Armies Assembled for War***

The allied armies of the antichrist will gather for the ultimate destruction of the Jews. The aim of this gathered coalition will be to once and for all destroy the Jewish people. Each member of the false trinity (Satan, the antichrist, and the false prophet) will be involved in this great battle (Rev. 16:13). Demons will also be involved in summoning the kings of the earth so that their armies can come to the battle (Rev. 16:14). The assembling of these armies will take place with the unleashing of the sixth bowl judgment.

John tells us that the Euphrates River will play a key part in the sixth bowl judgment (Rev. 16:12). By the time the sixth bowl is poured out, the Euphrates will be very different from how it looks today or has ever been. With the pouring out of the fourth bowl judgment, the sun will bring forth fierce heat that will melt the snow and ice cap on Mount Ararat, which feeds the Euphrates. The Euphrates River will be overflowing with water which is why the sixth bowl becomes important. With the pouring out of the sixth bowl judgment, the Euphrates will be dried up making it much easier for the armies to cross the river and assemble for battle at Armageddon. Drying up the river is not an act of kindness by God for the kings and their armies. Instead, it will be a death trap, like the Red Sea was for the Egyptian army.

### ***Phase 2: Babylon is Destroyed***

In Revelation 17 and 18, there is a description given of the destruction of antichrist’s false system, identified as Babylon. Chapters 17 and 18 are inserted into the chronological order of Revelation and continue through chapter 19. However, chapters 17 and 18 describe events that take place before the seventh bowl is poured out and the loud voice comes from the throne of the temple saying, “It is done” (Rev. 16:17).

The antichrist will build his false system called Babylon during the tribulation period, but it will come to its final destruction at the end of the tribulation. This false system that he builds will be twofold. It will be both a worldwide religion as well as a commercial and economic center. Chapter 17 records the fall of religious Babylon. Chapter 18 records the fall of commercial and economic Babylon.

In chapter 17, John is shown what will take place at the fall of religious Babylon. Throughout history, Babylon has been an important center of false religion. Genesis 11 records the event of the Tower of Babel which highlights man’s rebellion against God and the worship of false gods. God scattered the people at Babel, but they took their false religion with them. In the end times, false religion will come back to where it started, and the antichrist will use it to get the world to

worship him (Rev. 13:12). This religious system is depicted in Revelation 17 as a harlot (Rev. 17:1, 5). The harlot's authority will have a great impact on the entire world as the world will be committed to false worship of the Babylonian system, rather than worship of the one true God.

Religion has been used by many tyrannical leaders throughout history to deceive people. People are religious by nature because God created them to be worshipers. However, at the midpoint of the tribulation, once the antichrist has used this religious system to win the masses, he will destroy it and will want the world to worship only him (Rev. 17:15–16). This false religious system will be absorbed into commercial Babylon, which will rule the last three and a half years until its final destruction.

Chapter 18 describes the destruction of commercial Babylon at the end of the tribulation. Though some commentators view Babylon in chapter 18 as a symbol for the antichrist's whole godless system, the Babylon in chapter 18 is most likely an actual city (Rev. 18:10, 16, 18, 19, 21). At some point in the late half of the tribulation, the antichrist will shift his headquarters from Jerusalem to Babylon. There are also Old Testament prophecies given about Babylon that are still unfulfilled (Isa. 13:19–22; 14:22–23; Jer. 50:13, 39; 51:37), which argues for Babylon being an actual city. This rebuilt city will have a worldwide impact.

As the antichrist's capital city, it will be the hub of his commercial empire. There will be kings, merchants, and shipmasters (Rev. 18:9, 11, 17) who will do business in this commercial hub. However, this city will be destroyed in one day (Rev. 18:8). This will cause great weeping from the kings, merchants, and shipmasters as there will be no more goods to be transported from this commercial center. This will cause great political and economic destruction to the antichrist's empire. When Babylon is destroyed, the antichrist will not be present in the city. He will be told of its destruction by messengers (Jer. 50:43; 51:31–32) which will cause him to become even more enraged.

### ***Phase 3: Jerusalem Is Attacked and Ravaged***

Remember that the goal of the antichrist is to destroy the Jewish people. Although his capital city of Babylon has been destroyed by a coalition from the north (Jer. 50:9), that will not distract him from seeking to destroy the Jews. Instead of launching a counterattack on those who destroyed his city, he will move to attack Jerusalem. Zechariah 12:1–3 describes this horrific scene.

The antichrist will be able to gather all the nations of the earth against Jerusalem and the entire nation of Israel (Zech. 12:2; 14:2). The antichrist will attack Jerusalem and will be able to capture the city and half of the people will be exiled (Zech. 14:2). It will seem as if the antichrist has won and gained the victory over God's people. However, as we will see in the next lesson, there will be an intervention in which Israel will turn to their Messiah who will come to gain the victory for them.

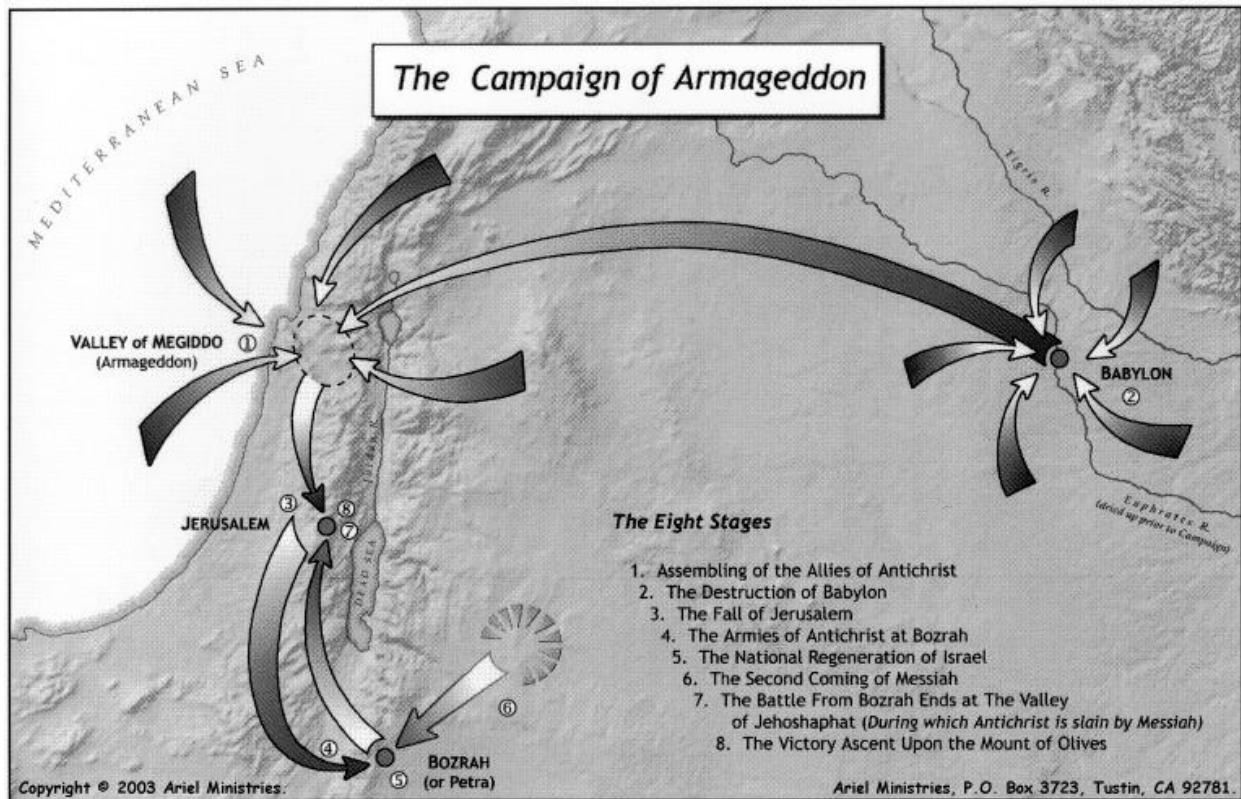
### ***Phase 4: The Antichrist Moves to Attack the Remnant***

Not all the Jews are in Jerusalem when the antichrist and his forces attack Jerusalem. Remember that at the midpoint of the tribulation many Jews fled to the wilderness for safety from the antichrist during the great tribulation (Rev. 12:6, 14). Christ also, in His Olivet Discourse, warns

the Jews to flee for their lives as quickly as possible (Matt. 24:15–16). Those who fled will most likely be in the area of Bozrah which is 80 miles south of Jerusalem. This would fulfill what Micah said in Micah 2:12, “I will surely assemble all of you, Jacob, I will surely gather the remnant of Israel. I will put them together like sheep in *the fold*; like a flock in the midst of its pasture they will be noisy with men.” “The fold” in verse 12 is Bozrah in Hebrew. In Greek, the city is known as Petra.

Why Bozrah of all places? Daniel 11:36-45 describes the conquest of the antichrist in the middle of the tribulation as the antichrist begins his world political takeover. But Daniel 11:41 states, “He will also enter the Beautiful Land, and many *countries* will fall; but these will be rescued out of his hand: Edom, Moab and the foremost of the sons of Ammon.”

While the antichrist does gain world political control, Daniel says three nations will escape his domination. These three nations are the ancient nations of Edom, Moab, and Ammon. Today, all three of these ancient nations comprise only one nation, Jordan, where the city of Bozrah or Petra is located. In Isaiah 63:1–6, Jesus is also seen returning first to Bozrah where the Jewish remnant is endangered. His robe is stained with blood because He has trampled down His enemies and saved His people. The antichrist will be set on destroying the Jews who fled.



**Application:**

1. Praise God for His protection of His people. He always protects His own in times of trouble.
2. Praise God for His victory. Because we belong to Him, we will be victorious as well.