



Introduction to the End-Times

4. Armageddon and Christ's Return

The Last Half of the Tribulation

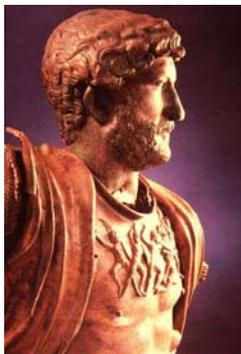


John describes the kingdom of the Antichrist as a seven-headed, ten-horned Beast (Revelation 13:1-3)

The last half of the Tribulation begins when the Antichrist and the False prophet after failing to destroy Israel, then begin to persecute the offspring of Israel, both Jews and believers in Christ (Revelation 12:17). After Temple worship is stopped (Daniel 9:27), the Two Witnesses killed (Revelation 11:8), The Antichrist installs an image of himself in the Jewish Temple, the Abomination of Desolation (Matthew 24:15), the whole earth is forced to choose between life and death, Satan or Christ. The Antichrist proclaims himself god and demands worship from the earth.

Satan uses lying signs to deceive the world, the False Prophet calls down fire from the sky as evidence of the power of the Antichrist (Revelation 13:13), who is incarnated by Satan at the start of the *last half of the tribulation*. He forces the world to worship him, both his person and image. True believers in Christ refuse; as a result, they are taken captive, and killed for their faith (Revelation 13:9-10). The false prophet then sets up an economic system to sort out true followers of the Beast (Antichrist) from others. He sets up a system causing all

who are true followers to receive a mark, 666.



1. The Antichrist and his kingdom (Revelation 13)

The identity of the Antichrist and his kingdom has always been a point of speculation by bible students. Scripture does give us clues to his identity and his kingdom. In the books of Daniel and Revelation, we get the most clues about his identity and kingdom. Daniel clearly links his person and identity with the Roman Empire, by linking him with the Romans armies which destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D. 70, calling him "The prince who is to come" (Daniel 9:26-27). Daniel informs us he will be a descendent of these armies.

From scripture, we know his kingdom will be at the start of the tribulation, a friend of Israel. He will in Israel's benefit, allow the Temple rebuilt at the expense of the Islamic world on the Temple Mount, the 3rd most spot for Islam. Another aspect of his kingdom will be military might, he will be able to enforce his agreement with world for Israel's benefit. His kingdom will be a united kingdom of ten nations, who turn over their power for just such a time. (Revelation 17:12, Daniel 7:24)

The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. Revelation 17:12

Using these qualifiers, we can establish several important points about this coming world leader and his kingdom.

- He will be a descendent of the Roman Armies who destroyed Jerusalem
- He will be pro-Israel at the start of the tribulation
- He will lead a powerful military kingdom
- His kingdom will be united from 10 nations
- His kingdom will be anti-Islamic, allowing the Jews to rebuild the Temple

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One can only speculate with this information and current circumstances in the world. The world today is frozen by the possibility of nuclear war and terrorism. Many Islamic fundamentalist groups relish the thought of one day causing the western and non-Islamic nations to fall. Nuclear terror in the US or Europe, killing thousands or even millions would change the world. Such an event could easily turn the world against Islam, allowing the Temple to be rebuilt as a form of punishment.

If the Rapture occurred before the tribulation, removing "True" Christians, those "Left Behind" might look for political and economic security through military power and strength. Such an attitude could cause the most powerful nation the world has ever known, the United States and European nations to unite for the purpose of world preservation and security. With a combined military and economy, the United States and Europe united, would easily be able to dominate an insecure world.

They would just need someone who would be accepted by both parties, who could lead the world forward. This person would be the Antichrist, called the Beast in Revelation 13 or the "Little Horn" in Daniel 7.

2. The False Religious system (Revelation 17)

First half



Following the rapture (Pre-tribulation) before the tribulation period starts, the Antichrist attempt to establish peace on the earth with the using the religious systems in the world. John sees this false religious system as harlot riding on the back of the Beast (Revelation 17)

1 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, "Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, 2 "with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication."

3 So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

4 The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones

and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication

Revelation 17:1-4

. Following the conflicts between Islam and Israel and the building of the Jewish Temple (Daniel 9:27), the rapture of Christians (I Thes. 4:13-16), the world is in a spiritual chaos. The False Prophet attempts to solve this problem of religious diversity and conflict by uniting the world under one system, uniting both Christianity and Islam under one religious system, eliminating fundamentalist in both camps. Today many compare radical fundamentalist Muslims with "Born again" Christians, claiming they are identical. Many see a combined religious system as a solution to much of the earth's dilemmas. Under the banner of security, those who refuse to become part of the state religion will be eliminated from the population (Revelation 6:9-11).

Second half

In the second half of the tribulation events change, the False Prophet now causes all to turn from the unified state religious system. He has surviving humanity worship the Beast and his image (The Antichrist), incarnated by Satan. An image of the Beast is set up in the Temple, and the earth is commanded to worship his person and image. Revelation pictures the False prophet with two horns like a lamb. Horns represent points of authority and the lamb is a picture of Christ mentioned throughout revelation. These two horns, like a lamb could represent Islam and apostate Christianity. This unified religious system exists in the first half.

11 Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. 12 And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

Revelation 13:11-12

The Beast and Prophet destroy the religious system in the 2nd half, who replace it with worship of Satan, in the person of Antichrist. All those refusing to submit to this change are destroyed. The united kings who unite their kingdom to the Antichrist hate the religious system and seek its destruction.

16 "And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. Revelation 17:16

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3. God warns humanity (Revelation 14)

The situation for humanity at this point seems doomed. Those who have survived to this point, now being forced to worship Satan, must submit, if they want to live. Most Christians, have died, or will be killed if they reject the Beast, what choice does somebody have? At this point God super-naturally intervenes on surviving humanity.



He sends three angels to warn humanity to make the right choices.

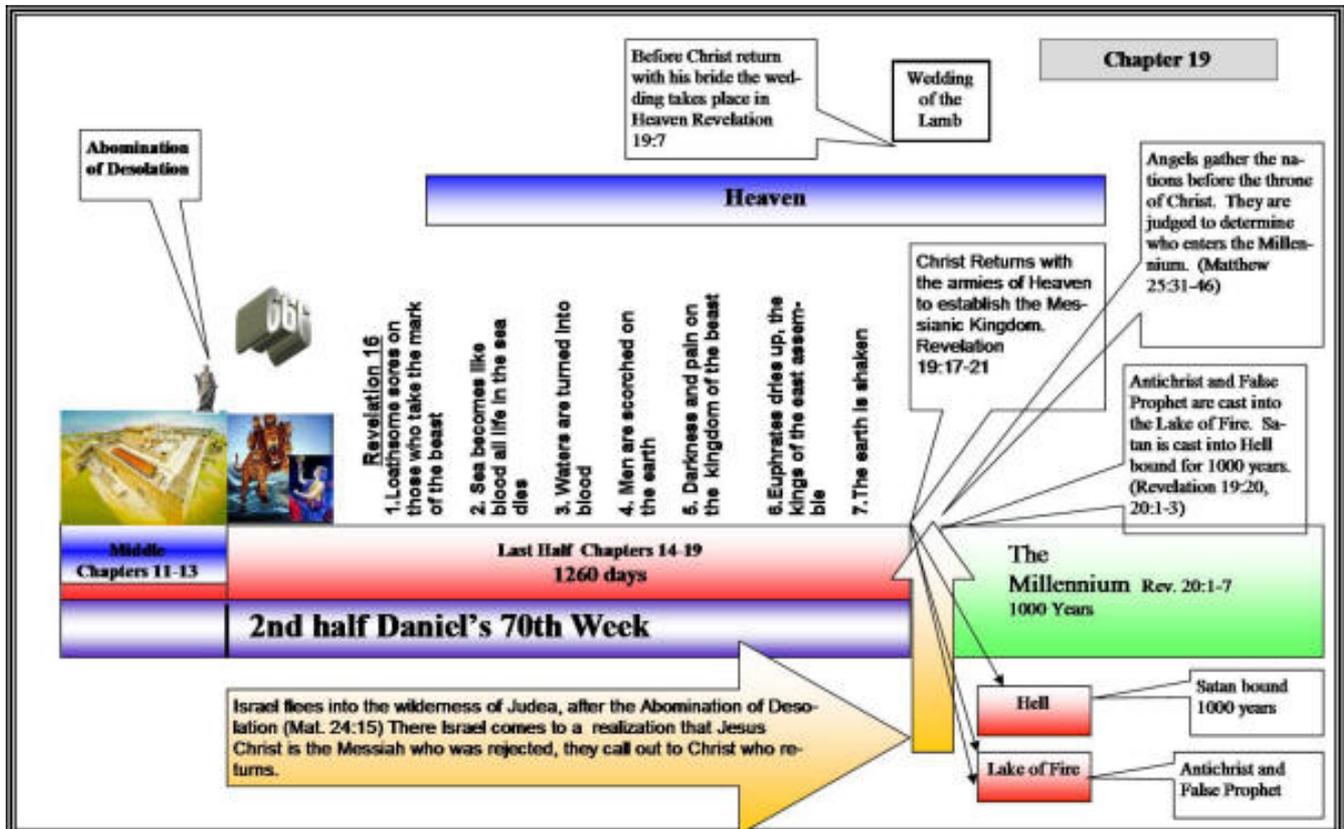
1. The first angel proclaims the "Everlasting Gospel" to "every nation, tribe, tongue, and people". (Revelation 14:6-7)
2. The second angel warns about the coming destruction of "Babylon" who has corrupted the earth. (Revelation 14:8)
3. The third angel finally warns humanity to reject the mark and not worship the Beast or his image.

He then warns what those who worship the Beast can expect for the rest of eternity (Revelation 14:9-11).

He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. 11 "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 14:10b-11

Humanity warned super-naturally by these three angels, everyone whose name is in Heaven (the saved) reject the Beast when forced to receive the Mark, 666, and worship the Beast and his image. Listening to the angels, they choose death and Heaven. People at this point choose death or attempt to hide. Through death, God is separating his people from Satan's people.

Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.' " "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them." Revelation 14:13



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4. Martyrs in Heaven (Revelation 15)

John in the book of Revelation, following the warning to the earth by the three angels, sees the results of their work. He sees a people in heaven who rejected the image and mark of the Beast. Killed on earth, they stand in Heaven before the throne of God. (Daniel 7:25)

7 It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.

9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear.

10 He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

Revelation 13:7,9-10

2 And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. **Revelation 15:2**

With many of God's people killed on earth, but living in Heaven, God is free to pour out His wrath on those who persecuted and killed His people. John now sees seven angels emerge from the Temple in Heaven with seven bowls, filled with the wrath of God.



5. God pours out his wrath (Revelation 16)

The Antichrist and False Prophet and their minions search out survivors on the earth, forcing humanity to make a choice between Satan and the God of Heaven. People who want to live, choose Satan by receiving the mark, those who choose Christ, choose death if caught. Seven angels, who emerge from the Temple in Heaven, now have the seven-bowls of God's final wrath. When the angels pour out their bowls, the earth experiences the wrath of God.

The Bowl Judgments

1. "foul and loathsome sore" Those on earth who choose Satan, now are the first to experience the wrath of God. The Mark, which seemed to offer life now offers pain and suffering, and foretaste of eternal suffering. When the first angel poured his bowl those who choose the mark experience pain and agony as the mark becomes puss oozing sore (Revelation 16:2).

2. "sea, and it became blood as of a dead man" During the trumpet judgments 1/3 of the sea turned to blood and 1/3 of the creatures died. Now all of the oceans turn to blood and all the creatures in the sea die. With the death of life in the sea, a major source of food and supplies eliminates a major source of food for those on earth. Those who worship nature and called the earth "Mother" must acknowledge the Earth is subject to God. (Revelation 16:3) This happens when the second angel pours his bowl.

3 "rivers and springs of water, and they became blood" When the third angel pours his bowl, the drinking waters become poisoned and become blood (Revelation 16:5-7). This was God's retribution for the blood of martyrs killed by the Beast and his system. God is cutting off access to survival forcing those on the earth to battle.

4. "men were scorched with great heat" The fourth angel pours out his bowl on the Sun, heat from the sun now scorches those on earth. The lost on the earth, react by blaspheming the God of Heaven, rather than crying out for mercy (Revelation 16:8-9). Here the true character of the lost is demonstrated as man chooses to raise a fist at God rather than cry out for mercy. Man repeats his blasphemies following the 5th and 7th bowl judgments demonstrating their lost and unredeemable state.

5. "his kingdom became full of darkness" When the 5th angel pours out his bowl the throne or capital city, "New Babylon" is cast into darkness. Those who sought refuge from the judgments in the capital of the Antichrist's kingdom face a gloomy darkness. The darkness is a taste of their eternity. In pain, humanity again blasphemes the God of Heaven. (Revelation 16:10-11)

6. "Euphrates, and its water was dried up" The 6th angel pours his bowl and the Euphrates river is dried up in preparation of the "Kings of the East", to gather the nations and the world, to Armageddon, north of Jerusalem. In Israel the remnant of Israel who escaped when the Antichrist entered the Temple,

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The Abomination of Desolation are still in hiding. The nations now being gathered, place their last hope, to prevent their judgment by destroying Israel.

Satan's demonic forces gather the warriors of the nations, the weak and strong, hoping to prevent God's judgment by Israel's destruction.

13 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.

14 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.

Revelation 16:13-14

7. "earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth" As humanity gathers toward Israel, an earthquake unequalled in the history of humanity levels the cities of the earth. This quake causes any of the reluctant in the cities to join the massive movement of surviving humanity, to gather them toward Armageddon.

The sea of humanity gathering is then pelted with hail stones weighing a talent, about 120 pounds, again humanity curses the God of Heaven in their anger. (Revelation 16:17-21) They will soon mourn the coming of Christ, as He comes to judge them in glory and power.

6. Marriage of the Lamb (Revelation 19:1-9)

While those on the earth gather for battle with Jesus Christ, He is in heaven with the saints both Old and New Testament, those who were raptured before the tribulation (Pre-tribulation) and those killed during tribulation. The redeemed saints are presented as the bride of Christ¹, dressed in the clothes of redemption, prepared to enter Earth with Christ at the end of the Tribulation period.

7. Armies of the Earth gather to Israel

While the saints are in Heaven preparing to return with Christ, the armies of the earth gather toward Jerusalem, inspired and led by Satan, the Antichrist and False prophet who have deceived the nations. Joel writes about this day as the nations gather.



9 Proclaim this among the nations: "Prepare for war! Wake up the mighty men, Let all the men of war draw near, Let them come up. 10 Beat your plowshares into swords And your pruning hooks into spears; Let the weak say, 'I am strong.' " 11 Assemble and come, all you nations, And gather together all around. Cause Your mighty ones to go down there, O Lord. 12 "Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; For there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. 13 Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, go down; For the winepress is full, The vats overflow-For their wickedness is great." 14 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. 15 The sun and moon will grow dark, And the stars will diminish their brightness. 16 The Lord also will roar from Zion, And utter His voice from Jerusalem; The heavens and earth will shake; But the Lord will be a shelter for His people. And the strength of the children of Israel. Joel 3:9-16

¹ The Bride of Christ has various interpretations on who is included in this event. Some include only the church from Pentecost to the Rapture as part of the Bride, with Old Testament and Tribulation saints as invited guest who witness the wedding of the Lamb to the Church. Others would include the Redeemed of the Old Testament and Tribulation as part of the Bride of Christ at this point.

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8. Israel calls out to Messiah

As the armies of the Earth gather, Israel finally realizes the rejected Messiah of Isaiah 53 and Daniel 9:26, Jesus Christ, is their only hope as the nations gather. Israel now calls out to Jesus Christ with a heart of supplication and repentance, acknowledging their errors in their rejection. Jesus warned Israel in Matthew 23:39, they would not see Him again until they acknowledged Him as their Messiah.

Over 500 years before the birth of Jesus Christ, Zechariah wrote about his second coming, this future event when Israel would turn to the Messiah "they pierced" and rejected at His first coming.

9 "It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.
10 "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn. Zechariah 12:9-10

Joel pictures Israel heart of preparation for the Messiah over 600 years before the birth of Christ.

15 Blow the trumpet in Zion, Consecrate a fast, Call a sacred assembly;
16 Gather the people, Sanctify the congregation, Assemble the elders, Gather the children and nursing babes; Let the bridegroom go out from his chamber, And the bride from her dressing room.
27 Then you shall know that I am in the midst of Israel: I am the Lord your God And there is no other. My people shall never be put to shame.
Joel 2:15-16,27



9. Jesus the rejected messiah returns with saints and angels



With the wedding and the supper of the Lamb complete, the Lamb prepares to return with his bride to the earth. John sees Christ seated on a white horse along with the rest of the redeemed on white horses wearing the clothing of the Redeemed.

11 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.
14 And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.
Revelation 19:11,14

As the armies of the earth gather along the land of Israel, to the hills of Megiddo, they prepare for battle against God Almighty, deceived by Satan, Antichrist (The Beast) and the False Prophet. Surviving Israel calls out for redemption and salvation to Christ. Its at this point of national conversion, Christ comes to the rescue of a repentant Israel.

Zechariah describes the battle 500 years before the birth of Christ, as armies of the nations literally melt at Christ return. And blood pours throughout Israel as high as a horses bridle (Revelation 14:20)

12 And this shall be the plague with which the Lord will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, Their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, And their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths. Zechariah 14:12

Christ takes the Antichrist and False Prophet and throws them into the Lake of Fire (Revelation 19:20). They become its first occupants, and the rest of the lost will join them following the Great White Throne Judgment, which takes place at the close of the Millennium (Revelation 20:10-15). Satan is bound for 1000-years during the Millennium, unable to tempt the nations (Revelation 20:3). Birds are called to feast on the rotting corpses of humanity killed at Christ return (Revelation 19:17-18)

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10. Saints rule and reign with Christ in the Millennium

Christ establishes His throne on Earth with His saints. The angels now gather the survivors on the earth before Christ throne. Those who survive the tribulation must stand before the throne of Christ. Angels gather the nations, both the saved and un-saved. The angels gather believers Jesus Christ who are in hiding, as well as the lost to stand before Christ's throne. Jesus describes the event in terms of a Shepard dividing the sheep and the goats. The goats are the lost, who survived the tribulation, the sheep are the saved believers who also survived. (Zechariah 12:9-10)

31 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. 32 "All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats.

33 "And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Matthew 25:31-33

Those on the left, those who rejected Christ in the tribulation will enter Hell prepared for the Devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41). Those on the right of Christ, including Israel who escaped into the wilderness following the Abomination of Desolation, will enter the Millennium. They are the ones who will repopulate the earth after its devastation from God's wrath.

The resurrected saints including Old and New Testament, and those who died in the Tribulation, will rule and reign with Christ 1000-years as the population of the earth multiplies in the Millennium.

Tribulation saints: In Revelation a promise is made to those who die rejecting the Beast and his kingdom. They will rule and reign with Christ for 1000-years in their resurrected body.

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. Revelation 20:4

Church Saints: Jesus makes a specific promise to the disciples about their role in the Millennium. They will be responsible to judge the tribes of Israel in the resurrection or regeneration.

So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Matthew 19:28

Old Testament Saints: Like the tribulation and New Testament saints, the saints of the Old Testament such as David, Daniel and Jeremiah are each promised positions of authority in the age to come. David will rule over Israel, as their resurrected Prince.

But they shall serve the Lord their God, And David their king, Whom I will raise up for them. Jeremiah 30:9