

# The Tribulation Begins

## 6:1-17

### Introductory Notes

- We begin to see the judgment of God poured out on the Earth as the Tribulation period begins
- We will see the opening of six of the seven Seal and their accompanying judgments

### Outline

- The First Seal (False Peace) - vs. 1-2
- The Second Seal (War) - vs. 3-4
- The Third Seal (Famine) - vs. 5-6
- The Fourth Seal (Death)- vs. 7-8
- The Fifth Seal (Martyrs) - vs. 9-11
- The Sixth Seal (Earthquake and more) - vs. 12-17

### The Tribulation

- The Tribulation is a seven year period of great judgment on the Earth before the establishment of Christ's Millennial Kingdom.
- It is the 70th Week in Daniel 9:26-27
- It is the Day of the Lord in Zephaniah 1:14-18 and 20+ other verses
- It is one of the subjects of Christ's Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24
- The Rapture takes place before this time and the Church does not go through it (Revelation 3:10; I Thessalonians 1:9-10, 5:9)

### Notes

- I am not entirely sure of the timing of these judgments. At least the first five of these Seal judgments may not be tied to a specific event and may be more general in describing the period. I do think these occur, or at least begin their effects, in the first half of the Tribulation.
- The First Seal (False Peace) - vs. 1-2
  - This pictures the rise of the Antichrist
    - He rides a white horse, like Christ will in 19:11
    - He has a bow, but no arrows. This possibly refers to threat of force
    - crown - victor's crown, not a royal crown.
- The Second Seal (War) - vs. 3-4
  - War still rages in spite of man's efforts otherwise.
  - Matthew 24:6
- The Third Seal (Famine) - vs. 5-6
  - penny - Roman *denarius*, the common laborer's wage for a day
  - measure - roughly equivalent to a quart, supposedly enough for one man to eat in a day.
  - Put this together and the common man would barely be able to feed himself or family

- The Fourth Seal (Death)- vs. 7-8
  - The current estimated world population is 7.5 billion people, 1/4 of which is 1.9 billion. To give you some perspective, that is roughly the total population of China, United States, and Brazil combined. It is also roughly the combined population of Africa and Europe combined.
- The Fifth Seal (Martyrs) - vs. 9-11
  - The altar speaks of sacrifice, under the altar speaks of blood being poured out (Leviticus 4:7)
  - Note that these are not the only martyrs to come from the Tribulation (vs. 11)
- The Sixth Seal (Earthquake and more) - vs. 12-17
  - Many people take a very figurative view on this verses and say they represent an upheaval in human society.
  - I think this is not figurative but descriptive of actual physical events.
  - is Creation's reaction to the judgment that has and will come
  - "great earthquake" - I think the whole planet is shaken. It very likely could be cause of much that follows. See also Mark 13:8.
  - "sun became black as sackcloth" - sackcloth is probably black goat hair. An eclipse maybe? See also Mark 13:24, Joel 2:10
  - "moon became as blood" - as occurs in a lunar eclipse or with debris in the atmosphere. See also Joel 2:31, but please not John Hagee.
  - "stars of heaven fell" - Taken literally probably means a meteor shower of some significance. Taken figuratively, could speak of overthrow of kings and kingdoms (compare to Daniel 8:10).
  - "heaven departed as a scroll" - Part of the atmosphere removed? Not sure on this one. See also Isaiah 34:4.
  - "mountain and island were moved" - shifting of the earth's surface probably in conjunction with the earthquake.
  - Note that everyone is affected by these events and they all sense divine judgment.