

The Tribulation

A Biblical *Ordo Eschatos*



T. Pennington

CBC Doctrinal Statement

The Second Coming of Christ

We believe that the period of great tribulation on the earth will be climaxed by the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth as He went, in person on the clouds of heaven, and with power and great glory to introduce the millennial age, to bind Satan and place him in the abyss, to lift the curse which now rests upon the whole creation, to restore Israel to her own land and to give her the realization of God's covenant promises, and to bring the whole world to the knowledge of God (Deuteronomy 30:1-10; Isaiah 11:9; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Matthew 24:15-25, 46; Acts 15:16-17; Romans 8:19-23; 11:25-27; I Timothy 4:1-3; II Timothy 3:1-5; Revelation 20:1-3).

We also believe that before the tribulation, Christ will descend from heaven and at the sound of the trumpet the dead in Christ and all living believers will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. It is the purpose of God, in the rapture, to save His own from the wrath destined for the world (I Corinthians 15:51-58; I Thessalonians 4:13-17; Revelation 3:10).

Tribulation

Every Christian will Face Tribulation in this Life

John 16:33

³³ “These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.”

1 Peter 1:6

⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials,

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The Trials of this Life are to Accomplish God's Purposes

Romans 8:28

²⁸ And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

James 1:2–3

² Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,
³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.

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The Trials of this Life are to Accomplish God's Purposes

1 Peter 1:6–7

⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials,
⁷ so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

Romans 5:3–4

³ And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance;

⁴ and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope;

Tribulation

Greek for *tribulation* - *Thlipsi*

Literally, “a pressing together”

E.g., Matt. 24:9—“Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name

16x in the NT; 11x in this general sense

Cf. John 16:33; Rom. 2:9; 5:3; 8:35; 12:12; 1 Th. 1:6; Rev. 1:9; 2:9, 10, 22.

Tribulation (used specifically in Eschatology)

About 5x in the NT

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Tribulation

Defined by Cairns:

The Greek word *thlipsis* means “affliction.” The term is used to refer to the period of trial and terror affecting the Jews and the saints of God at the end of this age, immediately before the second coming* of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is usually referred to as “the great tribulation,” or, as the Greek of Rev. 7:14 puts it, “the tribulation, the great one.”

Tribulation Eschatological

Matthew 24:21 “For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will.

Matthew 24:29 “But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

Mark 13:19 “For those days will be a time of tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never will.

Mark 13:24 “But in those days, after that tribulation, THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT,

Revelation 7:14 I said to him, “My lord, you know.” And he said to me, “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Tribulation

Its Uniqueness

This tribulation will be unique in human history. In Mark's report of the Olivet discourse Jesus warned, 'For in those days there will be such tribulation as has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, and never will be' (Mark 13:19).

Though... there is some special reference to Israel in Old Testament prophecies of this uniquely distressful period (Jer. 30:4–11; Dan. 12:1), it will be world-wide in scope. The ones saved out of it (apparently while it is going on) are of every nation (Rev. 17:13), and again in the description of it in the Revelation it is the whole living human race who suffer its ravages. In Jesus' message to the Philadelphian church He spoke of it as 'the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth' (Rev. 3:10).

Tribulation

Its Beginning

The Tribulation will begin with the signing of the covenant by the beast, who promises to protect Israel (Dan. 9:27). Technically, the rapture does not begin the Tribulation; there may be a brief period of time between the rapture of the church and the signing of the covenant. The Tribulation will involve the judgment of God upon an unbelieving world, as detailed in Revelation 6–19. The consecutive series of seals, trumpets, and bowl judgments of Revelation detail God's judgment upon unbelievers, climaxing in the triumphant return of Christ to earth with His bride, the church (Rev. 19:11–21).

Enns

Tribulation

Important Terms

The Great Tribulation is the last half of the Tribulation period, three and one-half years in length. It is distinguished from the Tribulation period because the Beast, or Antichrist, will be revealed, and the wrath of God will greatly intensify during this time. Thus, it is important at this point to emphasize that the Tribulation and the Great Tribulation are not synonymous terms. Within eschatology (the study of future things), the Tribulation refers to the full seven-year period while the “Great Tribulation” refers to the second half of the Tribulation.

Tribulation

The Key Descriptions

The human perspective:

Birth pains (Is. 26:16-17; Matt. 24)

Trouble, Day of Trouble, Time of Jacob's Trouble (Jer. 30:7; Dan. 12:1)

Day of Distress (Zeph. 1:15)

Day of Darkness, Gloom, & Clouds (Joel 2:2; Zeph 1:15)

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The Key Descriptions

The divine perspective:

Day of the Lord (Ezek. 30:3; Zeph. 1:7, 14; Zech 14:1)

Day of Vengeance (Is. 34:8; 35:4; 61:2; 63:4)

Day of Punishment (Is. 24:20-21)

Day of Destruction (1 Th 5:3)

Day of Judgment (Rev. 14:7; 16:5; 19:2)

Day of the Lord's Anger (Zeph. 2:2-3)

Day of Wrath or the Lord's Wrath (Zeph. 1:15, 18)

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Some Key Passages

Deut. 4:30—"When you are in distress and all these things have come upon you, in the latter days you will return to the LORD your God and listen to His voice.

Is. 24:1—27:13

Jer. 30:1-11(especially 30:7)

Part of its purpose concerns ethnic Jews in their own land (Jer. 30:3).

Cf. Dan. 11:41

"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.

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Some Key Passages

Daniel 9:24-27 - Daniel's 70th Week

Jesus in Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14)

Paul in discourse about the Day of the Lord (2 Th. 2:4)

Dan. 12:1—"Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued.

Zeph. 1:14-18; Zech. 12-14; Matt. 24:15-31 (cf. Mark 13:14-27); 1 Th. 5:1-3; 2 Th. 2:1-12; Rev. 6-19; 6:12-17; 11:18-19; 14:10, 14-20; 15:1, 7; 16:1, 19; 19:15

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Daniel's Seventy Weeks

Daniel 9:24–27

²⁴ “Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.

²⁵ “So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.

²⁶ “Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.

²⁷ “And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.”

Daniel's Seventy Weeks

The prophecy of the Seventy Weeks was given to Daniel under circumstances that were most remarkable.

Daniel and his people had been carried away captive into the land of Babylon

The armies of Nebuchadnezzar had utterly desolated the city of Jerusalem)

According to an earlier prophecy uttered by Jeremiah, these "desolations" were to last for a period of seventy years. (Jer. 25:11)

The ninth chapter of Daniel opens with a reference to this very prophecy (9:1-2)

Adapted from Alva McClain

Daniel's Seventy Weeks

The prophecy of the Seventy Weeks was given to Daniel under circumstances that were most remarkable.

The elderly prophet Daniel who grew up in the courts of the Babylonian kings, understands from his study of the "Books" that the period of divine judgment must be nearing its close

Daniel prays to the God of Israel for light as to the future of his "city" and his "people" (9:3-19)

The prayer was not finished because of an interruption from a divine messenger with an answer from God. (21-23)

The divine reply contains a prediction concerning Christ's first coming. The messenger is Gabriel, the same messenger who several hundred years later would announce His birth of the virgin Mary.

Adapted from Alva McClain

Daniel's Seventy Weeks

The reader should keep in mind the following:

The entire prophecy has to do with Daniel's "people" and Daniel's "city," that is, the nation of *Israel* and the city of *Jerusalem* (24)

Two different princes are mentioned, who should not be confused: the first named *Messiah the Prince* (25); and the second is described as *Prince that shall come* (26)

The entire time-period involved is exactly specified as *Seventy Weeks* (24); and these *Seventy Weeks* are further divided into three lesser periods: first, a period of *seven weeks*; after that a period of *three-score and two weeks*; and finally a period of one week (25,27)

The beginning of the whole period of the *Seventy Weeks* is definitely fixed at "*the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem*" (25)

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Daniel's Seventy Weeks

The reader should keep in mind the following:

The end of the seven weeks and threescore and two weeks (69 weeks) will be marked by the *appearance of Messiah as the "Prince" of Israel (25)*

At a later time, "after the threescore and two weeks" which follow the first seven weeks (that is, after 69 weeks), *Messiah the Prince will be "cut off," and Jerusalem will again be destroyed by the people of another "prince" who is yet to come (26)*

After these two important events, we come to the last, or Seventieth Week, the beginning of which will be clearly marked by the establishment of a firm covenant or treaty between the Coming Prince and the Jewish nation for a period of "one week" (27)

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Daniel's Seventy Weeks

The reader should keep in mind the following:

In the “midst” of this Seventieth Week, evidently breaking his treaty, the Coming Prince will suddenly *cause the Jewish sacrifice to cease* and precipitate upon this people a time of wrath and the desolation lasting to the “full end” of the Week (27)

With the full completion of the whole period of the Seventy Weeks, there will be ushered in *a time of great and unparalleled blessings for the nation of Israel* (24)

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Daniel's Seventy Weeks

Four questions that must be addressed regarding this prophecy:

What is the Measure of the time indicated by the "Weeks" of this Prophecy?

If these "Weeks" are composed of years, what is the length of the year?

When did the whole period of the Seventy Weeks begin?

When did the first Sixty-Nine Weeks end and what happened on that date?

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Daniel's Seventy Weeks

What is the measure of time indicated by the “Weeks” of this Prophecy?

To the English reader the phrase “seven weeks” always means a week of days. The text of Scripture literally says “seventy *sevens* are determined. What these “sevens” are must be determined from the context and from other Scriptures.

Most important is the fact that in their divinely inspired calendar, the Jews had a “seven” of *years* as well as a “seven” of *days*. And this Biblical “week” of years was just as familiar to the Jew as the “week” of days. It was, in certain respects, even more important. *Six years* the Jew was free to till and sow his land, but the *seventh year* was to be a solemn “Sabbath of rest unto the land” (Lev. 25:3-4). Upon a multiple of this important week of years – “seven Sabbaths of years” – there was based the great jubilee of social and economic adjustment every fiftieth year, when debts were wiped out, estates returned to the original holders, and slaves went free (Lev. 25:8-9). Nothing could be so important to the Jew as the week of years.

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Daniel's Seventy Weeks

Reasons for believing that the “Seventy Sevens” of Daniel’s prophecy refer to this well known “seven” of years.

The prophet Daniel had been thinking not only in terms of years rather than days, but also in a definite multiple of “sevens” (10 X 7) of years (Dan. 9:1-2).

This period probably began in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, when Jerusalem was first captured and the temple treasures were taken. It ends with the decree of Cyrus to let the Jews return, spanning from ca. 605/04 B.C. to 536/35 B.C. The exact number of Sabbath years is 490 years, the period from Saul to the Babylonian captivity. **This was retribution for their violation of the Sabbath law** (cf. Lev. 26:34, 35; 2 Chr. 36:21). MacArthur

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Daniel's Seventy Weeks

Reasons for believing that the “Seventy Sevens” of Daniel’s prophecy refer to this well known “seven” of years.

Daniel knew that the very length of the Babylonian captivity had been based on Jewish violations of the divine law of the Sabbatic year. Since according to 2 Chron 36:21 the Jews had been removed from off the land in order that it might rest for *seventy* years, it should be evident that the Sabbatic year had been violated for 490 years, or exactly seventy “sevens” of years.

2 Chronicles 36:20–21

²⁰ Those who had escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon; and they were servants to him and to his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia,

²¹ to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths. All the days of its desolation it kept sabbath until seventy years were complete.

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Daniel's Seventy Weeks

Reasons for believing that the “Seventy Sevens” of Daniel’s prophecy refer to this well known “seven” of years.

How appropriate, therefore, that now at the end of the judgment for these violations the angel should be sent to reveal the start of a *new era* of God’s dealing with the Jew which would extend for the same number of years covered by his violations of the Sabbatic year, namely, a cycle of 490 years, or “Seventy Sevens” of years (Dan 9:24)

...the whole context of the prophecy demands that the “Seventy Sevens” be understood in terms of years. For if we make them “sevens” of days, the entire period would extend for merely 490 days or a little over one year. Considering now that within this brief space of time the city is to be rebuilt and once more destroyed (to say nothing of the tremendous events of verse 24), it becomes clear that such an interpretation is altogether improbable and untenable.

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Daniel's Seventy Weeks

Reasons for believing that the “Seventy Sevens” of Daniel’s prophecy refer to this well known “seven” of years.

Outside the prophecy of the “Seventy Weeks,” the Hebrew word *Shabua* is found only in one other passage of the book (10:2-3), where the prophet states that he mourned and fasted “three full weeks.” Now, here it is perfectly obvious that the context demands “weeks” of days, for Daniel would hardly have fasted twenty-one years! And significantly, the Hebrew here reads literally “three sevens of days. Now, if in the ninth chapter, the writer intended us to understand that the “Seventy Sevens” are composed of days, why did he not use the same form of expressions adopted in chapter 10?

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Daniel's Seventy Weeks

If these “Weeks” are composed of years, what is the length of the year?

It is quite well known that the various calendars of the nations have used years of different lengths, correcting the error by the addition of days from time to time. Even our own year of 365 days is not exact, the shortage being a little less than one day in four years.

Historical argument:

According to the Genesis record the Flood began on the seventeenth day of the second month (7:11), and came to an end on the seventeenth day of the seventh month (8:4). Now, this is a period of exactly five months, and fortunately the length of the same period is given in terms of days – “an hundred and fifty days” (7:24; 8:3). Thus the earliest known month in Biblical history was evidently thirty days in length, and twelve such months would give us a 360-day year.

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Daniel's Seventy Weeks

If these “Weeks” are composed of years, what is the length of the year?

Prophetical argument:

Daniel 9:27 mentions a period of Jewish persecution at the hands of the Coming Prince who will make a covenant with that people. Since this persecution begins in the “midst” of the Seventieth Week and continues to the “end” of the Week, the period is obviously three and one-half years. Daniel 7:24-25 speaks of the same Roman Prince and the same persecution, fixing the duration as “a time and times and the dividing of time” – in the Aramaic, three and a half times. Revelation 13:4-7 speaks of the same great political Ruler and his persecution of the Jewish “saints” lasting “forty and two months.” Revelation 12:13-14 refers to the same persecution, stating the duration in the exact terms of Daniel 7:25 as “a time and times and half a time”; and this period is further defined in Revelation 12:6 as “a thousand two hundred and three score days.” Thus we have the same period of time variously stated as 3 ½ years, 42 months, or 1260 days. Therefore, it is clear that the length of the year in the Seventy Weeks prophecy is fixed by Scripture itself as exactly 360 days.

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Daniel's Seventy Weeks

When did the whole period of the Seventy Weeks begin?

Daniel 9:25

²⁵ “So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.

This “commandment” by a large number of interpreters, has been identified with the decrees issued by Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes, recorded in the book of Ezra. But these decrees without any exception have to do with the rebuilding of the Temple, not the city. (Ezra 1:1-2; 4:1-5, 11-24; 6:1-5, 14-15; 7:11, 20, 27)

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Daniel's Seventy Weeks

When did the whole period of the Seventy Weeks begin?

Which Decree?

Decree of Cyrus – 538 B.C. (Ezra 1:2-4; 6:3-5)

Decree of Artaxerxes to Ezra– 458 B.C. (Ezra 7:11-26)

Decree of Artaxerxes to Nehemiah – 444 B.C. (Neh. 2:5-8, 17, 18)

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Daniel's Seventy Weeks

When did the whole period of the Seventy Weeks begin?

Which Decree?

The first is impossible -the 483 years runs out before Christ.

The second has little or nothing to say about rebuilding the city.

$458 - 490 = 26 \text{ AD.}$

Usually they date the crucifixion at A.D. 30 and put the termination of the 483 year period at the baptism of Christ.

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Daniel's Seventy Weeks

When did the whole period of the Seventy Weeks begin?

Which Decree?

The third is the prevalent view among premillennialists.

The Coming Prince by Sir Robert Anderson and Harold Hoehner

Nehemiah 2:5

Israel and most cultures at that time calculated based on a 360 day year

Anderson has the 69 weeks terminating precisely at the triumphal entry (A.D. 32).

Hoehner argues that the 483 years ended on the Triumphal entry in 33 AD.

Daniel's Seventy Weeks

Which Decree?

Nehemiah 1:1–4

- ¹ The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah. Now it happened in the month Chislev, in the twentieth year, while I was in Susa the capitol,
- ² that Hanani, one of my brothers, and some men from Judah came; and I asked them concerning the Jews who had escaped and had survived the captivity, and about Jerusalem.
- ³ They said to me, “The remnant there in the province who survived the captivity are in great distress and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates are burned with fire.”
- ⁴ When I heard these words, I sat down and wept and mourned for days; and I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven.

Daniel's Seventy Weeks

Which Decree?

Nehemiah 2:5–8

⁵ I said to the king, “If it please the king, and if your servant has found favor before you, send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers’ tombs, that I may rebuild it.”

⁶ Then the king said to me, the queen sitting beside him, “How long will your journey be, and when will you return?” So it pleased the king to send me, and I gave him a definite time.

⁷ And I said to the king, “If it please the king, let letters be given me for the governors of the provinces beyond the River, that they may allow me to pass through until I come to Judah,

⁸ and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king’s forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the fortress which is by the temple, for the wall of the city and for the house to which I will go.” And the king granted them to me because the good hand of my God was on me.

Daniel's Seventy Weeks

Which Decree? Several facts concerning the Nehemiah passage:

...it was a report of the ruined condition of the “wall” and “gates” of the *city* that aroused the deep concern of Nehemiah.

...after earnest prayer he dared to petition the King “that thou wouldst send me unto Judah, unto the *city* of my fathers’ sepulchers, *that I may build it* (2:5).

His bold request by the grace of God succeeded, as he tells us: And the king *granted me*, according to the good hand of my God upon me” (2:8)

Nehemiah records the exact date of this decree: “*in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king*” (2:1)

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Daniel's Seventy Weeks

When Did the first Sixty-Nine Weeks end and what happened on that Day?

69 Weeks of seven years each, and each year has 360 days: $69 \times 7 \times 360$
= 173,880 days.

Beginning with March 14, 445 B.C., this number of days brings us to April 6, 32 A.D.

To prove that the 173,880 days equal exactly the period from March 14, 445 B.C. to April 6, 32 A.D., it is necessary to compute this period in terms of our own calendar year, as follows:

445 B.C. to 32 A.D. is 476 years (B.C. 1 to A.D. 1 is one year)

476×365 Days = 173,740 days

Add for leap years 116 days (3 less than in four centuries)*

March 14 to April 6 = 24 days (inclusive)

Total = 173,880 days

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Daniel's Seventy Weeks

Concerning Leap Years:

To divide 476 by 4 would give 119 leap years. But since century years are not leap years unless divisible by 400 and since 476 years involve four centuries, it follows that only one of the four century-years would be a true leap year. Therefore, it is necessary to subtract 3 from 119 to get the exact number of extra leap year days in 476 years.

April 6, 32 A.D. was the tenth of Nisan, that momentous day on which our Lord, in fulfillment of Messianic prophecy, rode up to Jerusalem on the "foal of an ass" and offered Himself as the Prince and King of Israel.

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Daniel's Seventy Weeks

When Did the first Sixty-Nine Weeks end and what happened on that Day?

Anderson and McClain have the sixty-nine weeks terminating precisely at the triumphal entry which he says was in 32 A.D. – not likely for several reasons. Hoehner argues that it ended at the triumphal entry in 33 A.D. which is a possibility.

There is no way we can definitely fix that date with certainty with our present knowledge. But here's the big picture I want you to get. Listen carefully. This prophecy given in the lifetime of Daniel while the children of Israel were in captivity in Babylon - remember they were carried off in 586, the city was destroyed, the nation was destroyed, Daniel had gone a bit earlier. So we're talking about in the 500's before Christ, this prophecy was given about when Messiah the Prince would come. And the big picture is that regardless of which of these dates you take, the 483 years, the sixty-nine weeks, ended during the ministry of Jesus Christ either with His baptism or His triumphal entry. It's remarkable, absolutely remarkable.

Tom Pennington

Daniel's Seventieth Week

Theological Positions

The Continuous Interpretation

The whole period of the Seventy Weeks is continuous.

If this is correct then the 70th Week is a past event.

Adherents to the theory are not wholly agreed as to details, but the most important group believe that Christ died in the middle of the Seventieth Week and therefore this last Week must have ended three and one half years after the cross.

T. Pennington

Daniel's Seventieth Week

Theological Positions

The Gap Interpretation

The Seventieth Week does not immediately follow the Sixty-ninth Week, but there is a great parenthesis of time between these two which has already lasted for over nineteen hundred years, and therefore the Seventieth Week still lies in the future.

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Daniel's Seventieth Week

Reasons for the Gap Interpretation

Such a gap in time before the Seventieth Week is implied by the most natural reading of the prophecy.

In verse 25 we have a period of Sixty-nine Weeks ending with a definite historical event, the appearance of Messiah the Prince.

After these Sixty nine Weeks come two other events, the death of Messiah and the destruction of the City.

After these two events, we come to the final one week in verse 27.

If we follow the order of the record strictly, both the death of Messiah and the destruction of Jerusalem are placed between the Sixty-ninth and Seventieth Weeks of prophecy.

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Daniel's Seventieth Week

Reasons for the Gap Interpretation

Such gaps are not uncommon in prophecy.

Isaiah 61:1–3

¹ The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners;
² To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn,
³ To grant those who mourn in Zion, Giving them a garland instead of ashes, The oil of gladness instead of mourning, The mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting. So they will be called oaks of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.

Adapted from T. Pennington

Daniel's Seventieth Week

Reasons for the Gap Interpretation

Such gaps are not uncommon in prophecy.

Luke 4:18–19

¹⁸ “THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED,

¹⁹ TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD.”

Also: Isa 9:6; Zech. 9:9-10

Adapted from T. Pennington

Daniel's Seventieth Week

Reasons for the Gap Interpretation

The person who confirms the covenant in verse 27 cannot be Christ.

The nearest antecedent in the passage is 'the prince who is to come'. Also, even if it were talking about Christ, when did Christ make a firm covenant? And why would He have just made it for one week - seven years? And why would He have broken it in the middle? That doesn't make sense. That can't be Christ.

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Daniel's Seventieth Week

Reasons for the Gap Interpretation

Christ's death did not cause the sacrificial system to cease immediately.

He fulfilled the sacrifices, but it wasn't until 70 A.D. that they stopped.

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Daniel's Seventieth Week

Reasons for the Gap Interpretation

This passage refers to something called the abomination of desolation and we know that it has not yet occurred.

In Matthew 24, Jesus said it would come after His earthly ministry.

Some believe this took place in 70 A.D. The abomination of desolation was when Titus Vespasian went into the temple and desecrated it. This cannot be because in Matthew 24 Jesus says that immediately following that time, He will return. That hasn't happened yet.

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Daniel's Seventieth Week

Reasons for the Gap Interpretation

The person that's described in verse 27 corresponds very well with the person described in Revelation 12 and 13 who has not yet appeared and has not been judged as it's described he will be judged in Revelation 19.

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Daniel's Seventieth Week

Reasons for the Gap Interpretation

The fulfillment of the tremendous events in verse 24 cannot be found anywhere in known history.

To finish the transgression

To make reconciliation for iniquity

To bring in everlasting righteousness

To seal up the vision and prophecy

To anoint a most holy place

Alva McCain

Daniel's Seventieth Week

Reasons for the Gap Interpretation

The testimony of the Lord who shows that the Seventieth Week is still future.

Daniel 9:27

²⁷ “And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.”

The wing of abomination is connected with the stopping of the daily sacrifice, which takes place in the middle of the Seventieth Week

Alva McCain

Daniel's Seventieth Week

Reasons for the Gap Interpretation

The testimony of the Lord who shows that the Seventieth Week is still future.

Matthew 24:15

¹⁵ "Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand),

Matthew 24:21

²¹ "For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will.

Daniel's Seventieth Week

Reasons for the Gap Interpretation

The testimony of the Lord who shows that the Seventieth Week is still future.

Matthew 24:29–30

²⁹ “But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

³⁰ “And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory.

Daniel's Seventieth Week

Reasons for the Gap Interpretation

The testimony of the Lord who shows that the Seventieth Week is still future.

Whatever the “abomination of desolation” may be, there can be no doubt that Daniel put it exactly in the middle of the Seventieth Week, while our Lord placed it at “the end,” just before His second coming in glory. Therefore, the Seventieth Week must also come at the end of the present age just prior to Christ's coming in glory.

Alva McClain

Daniel's Seventieth Week

The famous 70th week

The week is still future (Arguments from Hoehner):

The six promises in 9:24 could not have all been fulfilled at Christ's death.

Messiah was killed not during the 69th week but after.

The person who confirms the covenant in 9:27 cannot be Christ.

Christ's death did not cause the sacrificial system to end immediately.

The abomination of desolation has not yet occurred.

The person described in 9:27 corresponds well with the person in Rev. 12-13 who has not appeared and has not been judged as described in Rev. 19.

T. Pennington

The Purpose of the Tribulation

To take back the earth from the usurper.

John 12:31

³¹ “Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.

Ephesians 2:2

² in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

1 John 5:19

¹⁹ We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

T. Pennington

The Purpose of the Tribulation

To bring redemption to Israel.

Zechariah 12:10

¹⁰ “I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.”

Romans 11:26

²⁶ and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, “THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB.”

T. Pennington

The Purpose of the Tribulation

To destroy false religion. (Rev. 17-18)

Revelation 18:2

² And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird.

Revelation 18:10

¹⁰ standing at a distance because of the fear of her torment, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For in one hour your judgment has come.'

T. Pennington

The Purpose of the Tribulation

To punish Christ rejecting people alive at that time.

Isaiah 24:21

²¹ So it will happen in that day, That the LORD will punish the host of heaven on high, And the kings of the earth on earth.

Isaiah 26:21

²¹ For behold, the LORD is about to come out from His place To punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; And the earth will reveal her bloodshed And will no longer cover her slain.

Revelation 6:16–17

¹⁶ and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb;

¹⁷ for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”

T. Pennington

Major Actors in the Tribulation

The Beast

Revelation 13:1–2

¹ And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore. Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names.

² And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority.

Revelation 19:20

²⁰ And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone.

Major Actors in the Tribulation

The Beast

Introduction: Rev. 13:1-8

The political and military leader of the final world empire.

Satan dominated and controlled

Aka:

The Little Horn (Dan. 7:8, 21-26)

The King (Little Horn) Dan. 8:23-25

The Prince who is to come (Dan. 9:24-27)

The Willful King (Dan. 11:36-45)

The Man of Lawlessness (2 Th. 2:3-11)

Antichrist (1 Jn. 2:18)

Adapted from T. Pennington

Major Actors in the Tribulation

The False Prophet

Introduction: Rev. 13:11-17 – the beast from the earth

The religious and spiritual leader of the final world empire.

Persecutes believers (Rev. 13:15-18) and promotes the worship of Antichrist with counterfeit signs.

(Rev. 16:13; 19:20; 20:10)

T. Pennington

Major Actors in the Tribulation

The Dragon (20:2)

Dragon = the vicious one who destroys; 13 x in book

Devil = slanderer

Satan = adversary

Serpent of old = identified with the fall

T. Pennington

Major Actors in the Tribulation

The Lamb

Revelation 5:5–6

⁵ and one of the elders said to me, “Stop weeping; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals.”

⁶ And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth.

Rev. 5:9-10

T. Pennington

A Brief Survey of Major Events

The Judgments (Matt. 24; Rev. 6-19)

Seven Seals

Seven Trumpets

Seven Bowls

T. Pennington

A Brief Survey of Major Events

First Seal

White Horse - Conqueror

This rider like the other three, is not an individual, but a personification of a growing movement or force that will be at work during this future period. Christ spoke of many imposters. Robert Thomas

Revelation 6:1–2

¹ Then I saw when the Lamb broke one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, “Come.”

² I looked, and behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.

Cf. Matt 24:4-5

A Brief Survey of Major Events

Second Seal

Red Horse - War

It brings war, internal strife, and international and civil strife to the world.
Thomas, R.L.

Revelation 6:3–4

³ When He broke the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, “Come.”

⁴ And another, a red horse, went out; and to him who sat on it, it was granted to take peace from the earth, and that men would slay one another; and a great sword was given to him.

Cf. Matt 24:6-7

A Brief Survey of Major Events

Third Seal

Black Horse - Famine

The horse's color is black, suggesting a time of lamentation and mourning (Scott). The sorrowing results from a scarcity of food and anxiety created by this shortage (cf. Lam. 4:8–9). Provisions are so expensive that only the wealthy have enough. Thomas, R. L.

Revelation 6:5–6

⁵ When He broke the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, "Come." I looked, and behold, a black horse; and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand.

⁶ And I heard something like a voice in the center of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not damage the oil and the wine."

Cf. Matt 24:7

A Brief Survey of Major Events

Fourth Seal

Pale Horse - Death

The ravages of this fourth seal are staggering, but limited in comparison with what comes later (Beckwith; Ladd). If today's world population figure of five billion is used, ... ("one-fourth of the earth") means that Death and Hades have authority, which they apparently will exercise, to take the lives of one and a quarter billion people. Thomas, R. L.

Revelation 6:7–8

⁷ When the Lamb broke the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, "Come."

⁸ I looked, and behold, an ashen horse; and he who sat on it had the name Death; and Hades was following with him. Authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth.

Cf. Matt 24:7

A Brief Survey of Major Events

Fifth Seal

Martyrs

Their prayers for God's vengeance against the earth dwellers are heard and certain vindication against their slayers is more fully assured. MacArthur

Revelation 6:9–11

⁹ When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained;

¹⁰ and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"

¹¹ And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, would be completed also.

Cf. Matt 24:9

A Brief Survey of Major Events

Sixth Seal

Great Day of Wrath

Revelation 6:12–17

¹² I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood;

¹³ and the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind.

¹⁴ The sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

¹⁵ Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains;

¹⁶ and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb;

¹⁷ for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”

Cf. Matt 24:29

A Brief Survey of Major Events

Seventh Seal

½ Hour of Silence, Introduction of Trumpets

Revelation 8:1–6

¹ When the Lamb broke the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.

² And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them.

³ Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, so that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which was before the throne.

⁴ And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand.

⁵ Then the angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar, and threw it to the earth; and there followed peals of thunder and sounds and flashes of lightning and an earthquake.

⁶ And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound them.

Cf. Matt 24:37ff

A Brief Survey of Major Events

The Trumpet Judgments

In contradistinction to the last three trumpets, the first four afflict natural objects, i.e., earth, trees, grass, sea, rivers, and the like. The fifth and sixth have men as their special objects, and unlike the first four which are connected and interdependent, are separate and independent. Thomas, R.L.

A Brief Survey of Major Events

First Trumpet

Hail, Fire and Vegetation

Revelation 8:7

⁷ The first sounded, and there came hail and fire, mixed with blood, and they were thrown to the earth; and a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up.

A Brief Survey of Major Events

Second Trumpet

Mountain of Fire, 1/3 of sea life destroyed

Revelation 8:8–9

⁸ 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,

⁹ and a third of the creatures which were in the sea and had life, died; and a third of the ships were destroyed.

A Brief Survey of Major Events

Third Trumpet

Star called wormwood falls, 1/3 of fresh water poisoned

Revelation 8:10–11

¹⁰ 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 waters.

¹¹ The name of the star is called Wormwood; and a third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the waters, because they were made bitter.

A Brief Survey of Major Events

Fourth Trumpet

Partial darkness; 1/3 of sun, moon and stars

Amos called the Day of the Lord a day of darkness (Amos 5:18; cf. Isa. 13:10; Joel 2:2; Mark 13:24). The fourth trumpet fulfills this anticipation (Mounce). Thomas, R. L.

Revelation 8:12

¹² The fourth angel sounded, and a third of the sun and a third of the moon and a third of the stars were struck, so that a third of them would be darkened and the day would not shine for a third of it, and the night in the same way.

A Brief Survey of Major Events

Fifth Trumpet

Woe # 1: Locusts from the abyss

Revelation 9:1–6

- ¹ Then the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth; and the key of the bottomless pit was given to him.
- ² He opened the bottomless pit, and smoke went up out of the pit, like the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit.
- ³ Then out of the smoke came locusts upon the earth, and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power.
- ⁴ They were told not to hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree, but only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.
- ⁵ And they were not permitted to kill anyone, but to torment for five months; and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings a man.
- ⁶ And in those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will long to die, and death flees from them.

A Brief Survey of Major Events

Sixth Trumpet

Woe # 2: Four angels loosed at Euphrates; they slay 1/3 of the earth's population

Revelation 9:13–15, 18

¹³ Then the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,

¹⁴ one saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, “Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.”

¹⁵ And the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released, so that they would kill a third of mankind.

¹⁸ A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which proceeded out of their mouths.

A Brief Survey of Major Events

Seventh Trumpet

Announcement of the Lord's Victory – Seven Bowls

Revelation 11:15–19

¹⁵ Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.”

¹⁶ And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God,

¹⁷ saying, “We give You thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who are and who were, because You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign.

¹⁸ “And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth.”

¹⁹ And the temple of God which is in heaven was opened; and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple, and there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm.

A Brief Survey of Major Events

Seventh Trumpet

Announcement of the Lord's Victory – Seven Bowls

Revelation 15:5–16:1

⁵ After these things I looked, and the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened,

⁶ and the seven angels who had the seven plagues came out of the temple, clothed in linen, clean and bright, and girded around their chests with golden sashes.

⁷ 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.

⁸ And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power; and no one was able to enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.

¹ Then I heard a loud voice from the temple, saying to the seven angels, “Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God.”

A Brief Survey of Major Events

First Bowl

Sores

Revelation 16:2

² So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth; and it became a loathsome and malignant sore on the people who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image.

A Brief Survey of Major Events

Second Bowl

Seas become blood; all marine life dies

Revelation 16:3

³ The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became blood like that of a dead man; and every living thing in the sea died.

A Brief Survey of Major Events

Third Bowl

Fresh water turns to blood

Revelation 16:4–7

⁴ Then the third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of waters; and they became blood.

⁵ And I heard the angel of the waters saying, “Righteous are You, who are and who were, O Holy One, because You judged these things;

⁶ for they poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink. They deserve it.”

⁷ And I heard the altar saying, “Yes, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments.”

A Brief Survey of Major Events

Fourth Bowl

Scorching sun burns men

Revelation 16:8–9

⁸ The fourth angel poured out his bowl upon the sun, and it was given to it to scorch men with fire.

⁹ Men were scorched with fierce heat; and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues, and they did not repent so as to give Him glory.

A Brief Survey of Major Events

Fifth Bowl

Darkness and pain on the beast's kingdom

Revelation 16:10–11

¹⁰ Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became darkened; and they gnawed their tongues because of pain,
¹¹ and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they did not repent of their deeds.

A Brief Survey of Major Events

Sixth Bowl

Euphrates dries up – prepare for Armageddon

Revelation 16:12–16

¹² The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river, the Euphrates; and its water was dried up, so that the way would be prepared for the kings from the east.

¹³ And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs;

¹⁴ for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty.

¹⁵ (“Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his clothes, so that he will not walk about naked and men will not see his shame.”)

¹⁶ And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon.

A Brief Survey of Major Events

Seventh Bowl

Severe earthquake and great hail

Revelation 16:17–21

¹⁷ Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl upon the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne, saying, “It is done.”

¹⁸ And there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder; and there was a great earthquake, such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth, so great an earthquake was it, and so mighty.

¹⁹ The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath.

²⁰ And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

²¹ And huge hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, came down from heaven upon men; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, because its plague was extremely severe.

Application

As you consider the greatness of the tribulation:

What do you learn about God?

His holiness

His hatred of sin

His commitment to justice

The magnitude of His wrath

Application

As you consider the greatness of the tribulation:

What do you learn about sin?

The offense it is to God

How much punishment it deserves

Sin is irrational

Application

As you consider the greatness of the tribulation:

What do you learn about yourself?

I don't understand the seriousness of sin

I can't imagine what it cost to pay for my sin

I am not near as grateful to Christ as I should be

I must learn to hate sin more and more! Prov 8:13

Application

As you consider the greatness of the tribulation:

What do you learn about Christ?

What love!

What an awful punishment He took in my place

2 Corinthians 5:21

²¹ He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Application

Warnings:

Romans 2:5

⁵ But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God...

Romans 2:8

⁸ but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.

Application

Encouragement:

Romans 5:9

⁹ Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.

Ephesians 2:3–5

³ Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

⁵ even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

Application

Encouragement:

1 John 4:9–10

⁹ By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.

¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

2 Corinthians 9:15

¹⁵ Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!