

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

S05 JESUS' BATTLE PLAN IN THE GREAT TRIBULATION – COREY STARK

I. INTRODUCTION: JESUS' BATTLE PLAN – 7 SEALS, 7 TRUMPETS, 7 BOWLS

A. In *part three* of the book of Revelation, “*Restoration of All Things*” (Rev. 4-22), there are five chronological sections that contain the details of *Jesus' battle plan* in the Great Tribulation to bring the mystery of God to completion, as seen in the New Heavens and New Earth (Rev. 21-22). It includes:

1. *Eradication of the mystery of iniquity* with its adherents and effects from the universe (Rev. 20:14-15).
2. *Creation of one new man* comprised of both Jews and Gentiles from every tribe and tongue (Eph. 2:15).
3. *Restoration of the created order* in preparation for the Father's permanent descent to the planet when His eternal state in heaven (Rev. 4) is openly manifest upon the New Earth (Eph. 1:10; Rev. 5:13; 21-22).

B. The five chronological sections describe *21 judgment events* that unfold on the earth in a sequential order and more fully develop the three summary statements in Rev. 5:8-14. Each *chronological section* is followed by a *parenthetical explanation* to help us understand the “*why's*” behind the “*what's*” of each section.

C. The *five chronological sections* primarily focus on *what happens to the Antichrist's empire and his follower's* in twenty-one judgment events (7 seals, 7 trumpets, 7 bowls) that intensify in severity, as they unfold on the earth in a sequential order. The release of each judgment series against the kingdom of darkness is preceded by the global unified prayers and worship of the end time Church (Rev. 5:8-10; 8:2-6; 15:1-8).

D. The *five parenthetical explanations* do not follow chronological sequence and function as a parenthesis, putting the storyline on “*pause*”, as John is given a pastoral, heart-to-heart, behind the scene's explanation answering, “*Why is God's judgment so severe?*” and “*What will happen to God's people?*” They explain:

1. What *Satan will do to oppose us* using the interference of demons, the persecution of the Antichrist empire, the deception of the False Prophet and the seduction of the Harlot Babylon system.
2. What *Jesus will do to support us* using the intervention of angels, the prophetic ministry of the Two Witnesses and the power of the Kingdom releasing provision, protection, direction and reward.

E. The future events of the book of Revelation reveal the thoughts of the Father's heart (Jer. 23:20) for Jesus to *take possession* of His promised inheritance of the nations and *transition* this age into the Millennium (Ps. 2:8-9; Dan. 7:13-14; Rev. 11:15-19). Jesus is the only unique person with the comprehensive authority, manifest power and infinite resources necessary to flawlessly execute the scroll of the Father's *master plan of restoration* with absolute precision (Rev. 5:1-10). The scroll of God includes the “*title deed*” to the planet and the “*battle plan*” of judgment necessary to bring the mystery of God to full completion (Rev. 10:7).

Rev. 11:15 The 7th angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!”

F. As Jesus opens the scroll the judgments within it are released on the earth against the kingdom of darkness through the global unified prayers of the end time Church (Ps. 149:6-9; 2 Chr. 20:21-22; Isa. 24:14-16; 42:10-13; Joel 2:28-32; Mt. 16:18-19; Lk. 18:7-8; Acts 2:17-21; Rev. 5:8; 6:9-11; 8:3-5; 9:13; 10:6; 14:18; 16:7; 19:2; 22:17). There is only one time in history when *all the saints* have the honor of releasing God's *written judgment* upon the nations in league with the Antichrist and that's the final generation, as seen in Revelation.

Ps. 149:6 Let the high praises of God be in their mouth... 7 To execute vengeance on the nations [in league w/Antichrist]... 9 To execute on them the written judgment – this honor have all His saints. (Rev. 19:2)

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II. UNDERSTANDING THE GREAT TRIBULATION

A. The *Great Tribulation* or “time of trouble” (Jer. 30:27; Dan. 12:1) is the *final years* of natural human history and *most referenced timeframe* in Scripture. It is designated as “half a week” (Dan. 9:27), *42 months* (Rev. 11:2; 13:5), *1260 days* (Rev. 11:3; 12:6), *time, times and half a time* (Rev. 12:14; Dan. 7:25; 12:7) and a *short time* (Rev. 12:12). God creates a *global crisis with no solution* apart from Him. It’s the *greatest pressure* the world has ever known (Jer. 30:7; Mt. 24:21; Dan. 12:1) and *catalyst* that transitions this age (Isa. 66:8).

Mt. 24:21 There will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved (Dan. 12:1)

B. Four “eschatological winds” will converge in *fullness* to create the “perfect storm” that brings in the *great harvest* of souls (Hag. 2:7; Am. 9:12; Acts 15:17; Mt. 24:14; Rev. 14:14-16), brings forth a *mature Church* in unprecedented unity, purity and power (Eph. 4:13; 5:27; Rev. 19:7; 22:17) and brings down the *antichrist system* of lawlessness by removing everything that hinders love (Rev. 6-19).

1. *Creations Groan* will progress from “birth pangs” (famines, disease, earthquakes) to full travail and finally birth (Ps. 82:5; Is. 24:5-6, 18-20; 66:8; Jer. 23:10; Mt. 24:7-8; Lk. 21:23-26; Rom. 8:18-22).

Rom. 8:22 For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.

2. *Man’s Sin* will become “fully ripe”, causing a great falling away from the faith due to the seduction and persecution of the Harlot (2 Thes. 2:3; 1 Tim. 4:1; Rev. 17-18). The mystery of iniquity will bring forth the Antichrist (Dan. 8:23; Joel 3:13-14; Mt. 13:24-30, 36-43; 2 Th. 2:7-10; Rev. 9:20-21; 14:17-20).

Dan. 8:23 In the latter time... when the transgressors have reached their fullness, a king shall arise [Antichrist] having fierce features, who understands sinister schemes. (Joel 3:13; Rev. 14:17-20)

3. *Satan’s Rage* will be fully unleashed against Israel and the end time Church, when he is cast from heaven along with all of his fallen angels (Eph. 6:12; Rev. 12:7-9).

Rev. 12:9 Satan... was cast to earth... 17 The dragon was enraged with the woman [Israel]... and went to make war with her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus.

4. *God’s Zeal* will be displayed in a 7-fold shaking of heaven and earth (Hag. 2:6-9; Heb. 12:25-29), as both His *wrath* (Rev. 15:1) and His *glory* (Acts 2:17-19) are poured out upon the earth in fullness.

Hag. 2:6 I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; 7 and I will shake all nations, and they [all nations] shall come to the Desire of All Nations [Jesus]... (Zeph. 2:11)

C. God will *shake everything* that can be shaken while *magnifying Jesus’ beauty* before all nations (Isa. 4:2), resulting in global worship and greatest harvest of souls in history (Hag. 2:6-9; Zeph. 2:11; Heb. 12:25-29).

D. Many are waiting to “go up” and *escape* the Tribulation, while God is waiting for us to “grow up” and *release* it! As Moses stretched forth his rod to release God’s judgment upon Pharaoh by prayer (Ex. 7-12), so the end time Church will stretch forth the “rod” to release the Tribulation judgments on the end time Pharaoh (Antichrist) through faith-filled words of agreement (Isa. 10:20-27; 11:11-16; Jer. 16:14-15; Mic. 7:15).

Mic. 7:15 As in the days when you came out of... Egypt, I will show them wonders.

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III. THE THREE NUMBERED JUDGMENT SERIES – 7 SEALS, 7 TRUMPETS, 7 BOWLS

A. Jesus' *battle plan* reveals *three unique sets* of God's judgment that are numbered sequentially in the order they unfold 1-2-3-4-5-6-7. They are the "*three numbered judgment series*" of 7 seals (Rev. 6:1-17; 8:1-5), 7 trumpets (Rev. 8:2-9:21; 11:15-19) and 7 bowls of wrath (Rev. 15:1-16:21), describing *21 judgment events* to be released against the kingdom of darkness *not* God's people. The Church releases these in partnership with Jesus through *global unified faith-filled words of agreement* (Rev. 5:8-10; 6:9-11; 8:3-6; 15:1-8; 22:17).

Lk. 18:7 And shall God not avenge [release justice for] His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? 8 I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith [agreement] on the earth?" (Mt. 16:18-19)

B. All 21 events are *divine*, originating in the wisdom of God's heart and mind, determined in the eternal counsels of the Godhead and released under His authority (Isa. 63:4; Jer. 23:18-20; 30:23-24; Rev. 5:1-7). As the heavens are higher than the earth, so God's ways and thoughts are infinitely higher than ours (Isa. 55:8-9).

Jer. 23:18 Who has stood in the counsel of the Lord... 20 The anger of the Lord will not turn back until He has executed and performed the thoughts of His heart. In the latter days you will understand it perfectly.

C. All 21 events are *good*. God is love and cannot deny Himself (1 Jn. 4:8, 16). Therefore, His judgments do not violate love, but rather express it, as judgment removes everything that hinders love. Since God is eternal, infinite and wise He defines love for humans who are created, finite and shortsighted. God always acts in perfect love and wisdom for the good of His people and the planet forever (Isa. 63; Hab. 3:12-13; Rev. 11:18).

Ps. 45:3 Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Mighty One, with Your glory and Your majesty. 4 And in Your majesty ride prosperously [Rev. 19:11] because of truth, humility, and righteousness... (Heb. 1:8)

D. All 21 events are truly *just* and in agreement with God's righteous nature. Jesus will use the least severe means to take the greatest number of people to the deepest level of love without violating anyone's freewill (Ps. 19:9; Lk. 18:7-8; Rom. 12:19; Rev. 6:10; 15:3; 16:7; 18:20; 19:2, 11).

Rev. 19:11 He was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.

E. All 21 events are *literal*. These 21 events must not be exaggerated as symbolic or diminished as prophetic poetry. Some commentaries written prior to 1948 teach that everything in Revelation must be symbolic, since there was no Jerusalem in Israel. But after the restoration of Israel in 1948 and control of Jerusalem in 1967?

Rev. 22:18 If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues written in this book; 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life...

F. All 21 events are yet *future*. Some commentators believe Revelation describes events that occurred during Jerusalem's destruction in 70 AD, however Jesus didn't show John the "*things which must take place AFTER this*" until approximately 90 AD (Rev. 4:1)! Jesus will *only* take the scroll and break the seven seals to release judgment *after* the bowls of prayer are *completely full*, which speaks of the maturity of the Church (Rev. 5:8).

Rev. 5:8 Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

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G. All 21 events are *numbered* according to the chronological sequence in which they occur. As God's judgments progressively unfold according to their numbered sequence 1-2-3-4-5-6-7, the global end time Church throughout the nations will become increasingly *unified* and *focused* in the prayer of faith.

Rev. 8:1 *When He opened the seventh seal... 2 I saw the seven angels... and to them were given seven trumpets... 6 So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. (Rev. 15:1)*

H. All 21 events are *progressive* being likened to birth pangs (Mt. 24:8; Rom. 8:22). As the judgments unfold, the rate of their frequency increases as the duration decreases, while intensifying in scope and severity. The theophanic storm-like activity escalates at the close of each judgment series (Rev. 4:5; 8:1; 11:15; 16:17-21).

Rev. 8:1 *He opened the seventh seal... 5 there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake.*

I. All 21 events are Jesus' *divine arsenal* of supernatural weaponry (Isa. 13:5; Jer. 50:25). He uses *lightnings* (Ex. 19:16; Job 36:32; Ps. 18:14; 97:4; Hab. 3:4; Zech. 9:14; Rev. 4:5; 8:5; 11:19; 16:18), *thunderings* (Isa. 29:6; Rev. 4:5; 8:5; 11:19; 16:18), *great noise* (Ps. 77:18; Isa. 29:6; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 4:5; 8:5; 11:19; 16:18), *earthquakes* (Isa. 2:10, 19, 21; 13:13; 24:19-20; 29:6; Ezek. 38:19; Hag. 2:6, 21; Zech. 14:4-5; Heb. 12:26-27; Rev. 6:12; 8:5; 11:13; 11:19; 16:18), *hailstones* (Job 38:22; Ps. 18:12-13; 78:47; 105:32-33; 148:8; Isa. 28:2, 17; 30:30; Ezek. 13:11-13; 38:22; Rev. 8:7; 11:19; 16:21), *coals of fire* (Ps. 18:12-13; Ezek. 38:22); *flooding rain* (Ezek. 13:11-13; 38:22), *stormy whirlwind* (Ps. 77:18; 107:25; 148:8; Amos 1:14; Zech. 9:14; Jer. 51:16; Ezek. 13:11-13; Rev. 7), *meteorites* (Mt. 24:29; Mk. 13:25; Rev. 6:13; 8:10-11), *scattering tempest* (Ps. 83:15; Isa. 29:6; 30:30; Amos 1:14), *overflowing waters* (Isa. 28:2, 17; Hab. 3:10), *burning wind* (Ps. 11:6), *destroying wind* (Jer. 51:1), *scorching heat* (Rev. 16:9), *blood* (Joel 2:30; Acts 2:19; Rev. 8:7), *devouring fire* (Ps. 50:3; 97:3; Isa. 29:6; 30:30; Joel 2:28-32; Ezek. 38:22; Rev. 8:7), *pillars of smoke* (Joel 2:30; Acts 2:19), *destroying storm* (Isa. 28:2; 29:6), *pestilence* (Ezek. 38:22; Hab. 3:5), as well as, supernatural *bows and arrows* (Ps. 45:5; 77:17; Hab. 3:9, 11; Zech. 9:14), heavenly *swords* (Ps. 45:3; Isa. 27:1; 34:5-6; Rev. 19:15), glittering *spears* (Hab. 3:11) and finally a *great panic* released upon His enemies (Ps. 83:15; Zech. 14:13).

Job 38:22 *“Have you entered the treasury of snow or have you seen the treasury of hail, 23 which I have reserved for the time of trouble [great tribulation], for the day of battle and war?”*

J. All 21 events are *prophetic*, containing a divine message couched within the judgment itself (Isa. 26:9; Rev. 16:6). The Church will proclaim these messages ahead of time to help others respond in loving faith to Jesus.

Rev. 16:5 *“You are righteous, O Lord... because You have judged these things. 6 For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink. For it is their just due.”*

K. All 21 events are both *punitive* and *redemptive*. They are designed to create a global crisis that results in the salvation of many (Hag. 2:6-9), while hindering (then stopping) the Antichrist's persecution of the saints by destroying His evil empire (Hag. 2:20-22). They're outcome is strategically designed (Ps. 45:3-5; Is. 26:9).

Isa. 26:9 *For when Your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.*

L. All 21 events give *deeper revelation* of the glory of Jesus. The entire book of Revelation, including the events is meant to unveil the unsearchable riches of Christ to the human heart (Rev. 1:1).

Rev. 1:1 *The Revelation [unveiling] of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place.*

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IV. THE SEVEN SEALS OF GOD'S PREPATORY JUDGMENT (REV. 6:1-17; 8:1)

A. The *first chronological section*, *SEAL JUDGMENTS* (Rev. 6:1-17) detail the opening of the first six seal judgments by Jesus, the Lamb of God not Satan (Rev. 5:5, 9; 6:1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12). The seventh seal is opened in Revelation 8:1-5 to initiate the second chronological section – the Trumpet Judgments (Rev. 8:2-9:21).

Rev. 6:1 I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals...

1. *First seal* (White Horse): Antichrist's political aggression (Rev. 6:1–2)
2. *Second seal* (Red Horse): bloodshed and world war (Rev. 6:3–4)
3. *Third seal* (Black Horse): famine and economic crisis (Rev. 6:5–6)
4. *Fourth seal* (Pale Horse): disease and death, 1/4 of humanity killed (Rev. 6:7–8)
5. *Fifth seal* (Prayer Movement): prayer movement strengthened by the martyrs (Rev. 6:9–11)
6. *Sixth seal* (Cosmic Disturbances): cosmic crisis and fear (Rev. 6:12–17)
7. *Seventh seal* (Anointed Prayer): prayer movement strengthened by angels (Rev. 8:1-5)

B. The seal judgments “*alert*” of transition, as the first four seals *prepare* the nations for God's wrath and glory. God *lifts His restraining hand* off of evil men, so they openly express the truth of their wickedness by attacking one another with great hatred and destroying resources, including Harlot Babylon (Rev. 17:16).

Rev. 17:16 The ten horns [kings] which you saw... will hate the harlot... and burn her with fire.

C. Jesus breaks the seals in response to the unified faith-filled words of agreement of the universal Church (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:17-21; Rev. 5:8; Rev. 6:9-11).

Rev. 5:8 Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

V. THE SEVEN TRUMPETS OF GOD'S WARNING JUDGMENT (REV. 8:2-9:21; 11:15-19)

A. The *second chronological section*, *TRUMPET JUDGMENTS* (Rev. 8:2-9:21) detail the sounding of the first six trumpet judgments by angels. The seventh trumpet is sounded in Revelation 11:15 to initiate the third chronological section – Jesus' Second Coming procession and the Rapture of the Church (Rev. 11:15-19).

Rev. 8:6 So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

1. *First trumpet* (Food supply): burning 1/3 of the earth's vegetation (Rev. 8:7)
2. *Second trumpet* (Food supply): destroying 1/3 of the sea becomes blood (Rev. 8:8–9)
3. *Third trumpet* (Water Supply): poisoning 1/3 of the earth's fresh water (Rev. 8:10–11)
4. *Fourth trumpet* (Light, energy): darkening 1/3 of the earth's light (Rev. 8:12)
5. *Fifth trumpet* (Torment): releasing demonic locusts tormenting 5 months (Rev. 9:1–12)
6. *Sixth trumpet* (Death): releasing demonic horsemen killing 1/3 of the earth (Rev. 9:13–21)
7. *Seventh trumpet* (Defeat): Jesus' second coming and eschatological revolution (Rev. 11:15-19)

B. The trumpet judgments “*warn*” of something more severe to come with 1/3 limitation, as they announce defeat for the reprobate, call unbelievers to repentance and gather, direct and deliver the saints (Num. 10:1-10; Ez. 33:1-11). They are *supernatural acts of God* through *nature* (Rev. 8:7-12), *demons* (Rev. 9:1-21) and *Jesus* (Rev. 11:15-19), as they target to destroy the Antichrist's resources and his followers. Jesus' power is displayed as infinitely superior to Antichrist, even as God's power triumphed through Moses over Pharaoh.

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C. Seven angels sound the seven trumpet judgments in response to the unified faith-filled words of agreement of the universal Church, including the 7th trumpet initiating Jesus' second coming and rapture of the Church (Ps. 149:6-9; Isa. 40:9-11; 42:10-16; 62:11; 64:1-2; Mt. 16:19; Mt. 25:6; Lk. 18:7-8; Rev. 8:1-5; 22:17).

Rev. 8:2 *I saw the seven angels who stand before God... 3 Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. And he was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the Throne. 4 And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand. 5 Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake. 6 So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.*

Rev. 22:17 *And the Spirit and the Bride say, "Come!"*

VI. THE SEVEN BOWLS OF GOD'S DESTROYING WRATH (REV. 15:1-16:21)

A. The fourth chronological section, BOWL JUDGMENTS (Rev. 15:1-16:21) detail the pouring out of the seven bowls of wrath, which is the third and final numbered judgment series. They complete the fullness of God's wrath, poured out to destroy the Antichrist kingdom and his followers (Rev. 14:9-10; 15:1, 7).

Rev. 15:1 *Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete. (Rev. 14:9-10)*

1. First bowl (Sores): loathsome sores only on Antichrist worshippers (Rev. 16:1-2)
2. Second bowl (Food supply): destroying the sea with blood, all fish die (Rev. 16:3)
3. Third bowl (Water supply): poisoning the fresh water with blood, undrinkable (Rev. 16:4-7)
4. Fourth bowl (Torment): scorching heat and fire from the sun (Rev. 16:8-9)
5. Fifth bowl (Destruction): darkening the Antichrist's global empire w/pain (Rev. 16:10-11)
6. Sixth bowl (Global guilt): deluding the nations to gather at Armageddon (Rev. 16:12-16)
7. Seventh bowl (Annihilation): earthquakes and hailstones, Babylon destroyed (Rev. 16:17-21)

B. The bowl judgments "destroy", as they are poured out in rapid succession without any delay or hindrance. They are the fullness of God's wrath sent to destroy all the evil infrastructures of the Antichrist's empire that have been permeated by the sorcery of Harlot Babylon (Rev. 17-18). As a "rod of iron" shatters fragile clay pottery to pieces, so no infrastructure in society (political, educational, financial, judicial, etc.) is exempt from the "rod of justice", as Jesus takes His promised inheritance of the nations as His possession (Ps. 2:7-9).

Ps. 2:8 *I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession. 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel. (Rev. 2:27)*

C. Seven angels pour out the seven bowl judgments in response to the unified faith-filled words of agreement of the universal Church (Ps. 149:6-9; Isa. 64:1-2; Mt. 16:19; Lk. 18:7-8; Rev. 15:2-4).

Rev. 15:2 *And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast... 3 They sing... "Great and marvelous are Your works Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints! 4 For all nations shall come and worship before You for Your judgments have been manifested..." 6 And out of the temple came the seven angels having the seven plagues...*

D. We are to contend for His will until... (Gen. 32:26). Will you stand in agreement with Him (Lk. 18:7-8)?