

## **A Brief Outline of Things to Come**

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### **Chapter Six -**

#### **DANIEL'S SEVENTIETH WEEK - Theodore H. Epp**

IN THIS TIME OF INSECURITY people are spending much of their time trying to solve world problems, but they are having no success. Their difficulty is that they have left GOD out of their plans and have tried to make their own utopia.

#### **THE FACT OF THE TRIBULATION**

The fact of the Tribulation is definitely verified by many prophecies in the Scriptures. Jeremiah 30:4, 7 speaks of it. In Ezekiel 20:35-38 we read:

**"And I will bring you [speaking of the people of Israel] into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face. Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord GOD. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant: and I will purge out from among you the rebels."**

There is more concerning this in Ezekiel 22:17-22:

**"And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross: all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are even the dross of silver. Therefore thus saith the Lord God; because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in mine anger and in my fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the Lord have poured out my fury upon you."**

In Malachi 3:1-3 we find an additional reference to the Tribulation. In Daniel 12:1 we read:

**"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book."**

Zechariah 13:8, 9 tells us that many of Israel will go through this Great Tribulation.

**"And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried; they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my GOD."**

Only one-third of the Israelites who enter the Tribulation will actually pass through it. However, I believe that this does not include the 144,000 who will be sealed.

The New Testament also speaks of the Great Tribulation. In Matthew 24:15, 21 we have this description:

**"When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place. . . For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."**

These, together with many other Scriptures taken from Revelation 6-19, give us the description of this Tribulation.

GOD will not always be patient with their neglect and rejection of Him. He has told us of a time of judgment when man's troubles will be multiplied and when he will suffer previously unknown torture and tribulation. This period of time is called the Tribulation, although it is also known as **"The Great Tribulation," "The Time of Jacob's Trouble," "The Passing Under the Rod," "The Melting Pot," "The Time of Trouble for His People,"** and **"The Great and Terrible Day of the Lord."**

We believe that this time cannot be very far away, for prophecies which point toward the soon arrival of this Tribulation period are being fulfilled.

However, those who have trusted CHRIST as their Saviour do not have to look forward to that time, for the Tribulation period will be preceded by the Rapture of the Church. At that time all Christians, those who have had their sins washed away by the Blood of CHRIST, will meet Him in the air and will be taken by Him to Heaven.

When the Church has been taken away, those who are left on the earth, the unsaved, will find the world suddenly cast into a chaotic condition. No man will be able to escape this time of trouble. The Tribulation will last for a period of seven years, between the dispensation of grace, the dispensation in which you and I are living today, and the Millennium, the time when JESUS will have His kingdom upon the earth.

The purpose of this Tribulation will be primarily to purify the people of Israel so that GOD once more can deal with them as His people. But the Gentile nations will also pass through this judgment.

## **TIME OF THE TRIBULATION**

The Tribulation begins after the Church has been taken away, when the Antichrist begins his reign on the earth.

Daniel made this statement:

**"And he [the Antichrist] shall confirm the covenant with many [of Israel] for one week"** (Daniel 9:27).

The word week is used here to determine a period of time known to us as seven years.

**"And in the midst of the week [these seven years] he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate"** (Daniel 9:27).

There are to be seventy weeks, or seventy periods of seven years each, for Israel. Sixty-nine of these periods were fulfilled at the time that JESUS CHRIST was crucified.

Daniel said that when sixty-nine of these periods were fulfilled, the MESSIAH would be cut off, and He was. Therefore, one period of seven years still has not been fulfilled. This is the period known as the Tribulation.

Concerning this time Paul said:

**"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in"** (Romans 11:25).

We have seen now that there is to be a Tribulation. It is a fact; it is described in many, many passages of Scripture. It will last seven years; it is a future time of testing and trial. It will be between the dispensation in which we are now living and the time when CHRIST will set up His kingdom.

### **PHASES OF THE TRIBULATION**

Beginning with Revelation 6 there is a detailed description of what will actually take place during this Tribulation. It is divided into two periods of three and one-half years each. The last half is characterized by such great furor, chaos, and anger of GOD that it is known as the Great Tribulation. Such a time has never been seen upon the earth before.

During this period of seven years the seals, the trumpets, and the vials will be fulfilled. In the opening of the seals GOD reveals how He will permit man to see his own destruction. In trying to save himself, man destroys himself. Then the trumpets are blown; here GOD permits Satan to come in great wrath, bringing more destruction upon the world. In the pouring out of the vials GOD's wrath is revealed.

During the Tribulation period GOD will permit man to come to the end of himself. But man will make an attempt to bring himself out of this particular chaotic condition, and GOD will permit him to try. Of course, man will turn to his only course of action - war. We have seen awful wars, but during this time wars such as the world has never yet seen will be fought.

## THE SEVEN SEALS

When the first seal is broken, the white horse will appear upon which the Antichrist will ride forth to conquer. Even now we see that the spirit of the Antichrist is in the communistic advances. However, the Antichrist will not be a Communist; he will be against them.

In the second seal we see the red horse, which speaks of war.

**"Power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword"** (Revelation 6:4).

That is followed by the third seal. Here we see that the black horse, which speaks of famine, will come immediately after this great war, or he may come during it.

Then comes the fourth seal. The pale horse speaks of death which follows famine, war, and pestilence.

In the fifth seal we see the martyred souls of those who were beneath the throne, the many who will trust JESUS CHRIST during the first part of the Tribulation and who will be martyred for their faith and brought into the presence of GOD. They will accept Him too late to be included in the Bride of CHRIST.

In the sixth seal, as recorded in Revelation 6, GOD answers. Whether this answer comes immediately after the first five seals or whether it continues to the end of the time of the Great Tribulation, I am not certain. But during that time some terrible things will happen. A severe earthquake will occur; the sun will be darkened; the moon will become as Blood; the stars will fall from Heaven; and the sky will be swept away like a scroll that is rolled up. Every mountain and island will be removed from its place. This is GOD's answer to man.

**"The kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"** (Revelation 6:15-17).

Between the sixth and seventh seal there is an interval of silence in Heaven.

**"And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour"** (Revelation 8:1).

No doubt this silence came because everyone saw what was yet to come upon the earth. Possibly even the angels were frightened or awestricken because of the awfulness of the wrath to come

upon men, the men who had defied and hated GOD, the men who had left Him out of their program and out of their plans, attempting to carry on in their own strength.

### **THE SEVEN TRUMPETS**

When the seventh seal is opened, the seven trumpets are blown. These trumpets reveal the judgments which GOD allows Satan to bring upon man.

When the first trumpet is blown, hail and fire mingled with blood will fall upon the earth, burning one-third of the trees and the grass. In Job 2 we see how Satan operates.

When the second trumpet is blown, a burning mountain, probably a meteor, will fall into the sea and kill one-third of the sea life, wreck one-third of the ships, and cover one-third of the sea with the blood of those who are killed.

Then the third trumpet will blow, and a great star will fall, poisoning the streams and fresh water and causing death to all who drink thereof.

When the fourth trumpet blows, a third part of the sun, moon, and stars will be smitten and will thus lose one-third of their light. Further explanation of this trumpet is given in Luke 21:25, 26.

When the fifth trumpet blows, the angel will announce the first woe. The bottomless pit will be opened, and locusts will appear with the sting of a scorpion to torment ungodly men. This may be some form of demon possession.

**"And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but, that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them"**  
(Revelation 9:3-6).

With the sixth trumpet comes the second woe. Four great angels appear at the head of a supernatural army of horsemen. The description of this is given in Revelation 9:13-19. They will slay one-third of the population of the earth with three plagues - the fire, the smoke, and the sulfur that will stream from their mouths. This is not the battle of Armageddon, if I understand the Scriptures correctly; rather, it is a terrible war which takes place after the great plague of demon possession. What an awful, awful time this will be!

The seventh trumpet announces the wrath of GOD, which will come when He pours out the seven vials of His wrath (Revelation 11:18, 19).

### **THE TWO WITNESSES**

At some time during the middle of this period GOD will send two witnesses to earth. We do not

know exactly who these resurrected men are, for they are not mentioned by name. Many think that they might be Moses and Elijah. They will witness to the world and will preach the great Gospel of the kingdom, telling that the kingdom is about to come and warning men to repent and turn to GOD.

They will be protected by GOD as they witness for three and one-half years. Eventually the whole world will hear their message. The Antichrist and his forces will attempt in every way to kill them, but they will not be able to touch them until the three and one-half years are over.

Then suddenly these two witnesses will be slain. The people will be so happy that they are dead that they will celebrate. But after three and one-half days these two witnesses will suddenly arise and be taken into glory.

Then great fear and trembling will come over all of the people of the earth. It is then that GOD prepares the way for His great wrath in the pouring out of the seven vials, the climax of which is the great battle of Armageddon.

### **THE UNHOLY TRINITY**

During the Great Tribulation Satan will be embodied in the Antichrist, and the world will know who he is. He will break his covenant with Israel and attempt to destroy them. We find the description of this primarily in Revelation 12.

In Revelation 13 we read of another Beast, an Anti-spirit who will arise with power. An unholy trinity will then be seen - the Devil himself, the Antichrist, and the Anti-spirit. Much power will be given to them, for the Devil knows that his time is at hand. Then GOD speaks in His final and great wrath.

### **THE SEVEN VIALS**

We have already examined the seals, during which the wrath of man is revealed. At that time about one-fourth of the population of the earth will be destroyed. In the release of Satan's wrath in the trumpets one-third of the remaining population of the earth will be destroyed. This will leave approximately one-half of the population of the earth for the final wrath of GOD upon the earth, which will take place during the last half of the Tribulation period, or the Great Tribulation.

**"And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth" (Revelation 16:1).**

This is GOD's Word. He has said that this will happen, and it will. Many have said that GOD will never pour out His wrath because He is only a GOD of love. Do not be deceived. GOD has said that if His love is spurned and rejected, His wrath will be seen, for GOD will vindicate His Son, who came all the way from Heaven to die for you. In the giving of His Son GOD manifested the greatest love that any human being can ever witness or receive. In turn His wrath will be just as great as His love has been. There are seven vials of the wrath of GOD to be poured out. When the first vial is poured out, loathsome, painful sores will break out on men

who have the mark of the beast.

When the second vial is poured out, the sea will become as blood, and every sea creature will perish.

The third vial shows that the rivers and fountains will become blood.

When the fourth vial is poured out, men will be scorched with the great heat. This makes them blaspheme GOD.

The fifth vial will be poured out, and darkness will come over the whole kingdom of the Beast. Men will gnaw their tongues because of the pain of the sores, which may have been caused by the terrible heat of the sun.

When the sixth vial is poured out, the Euphrates River will be dried up. Then the eastern kings will be able to cross in preparation for the battle of Armageddon.

The seventh vial will bring a great earthquake, followed by hailstones which will weigh as much as 100 pounds each. Many of these blasphemers will be killed.

### **THE FINAL DOOM**

Then the final doom will come - a sevenfold doom - the doom upon the ecclesiastical system. The Church will be gone during the Tribulation, but the ecclesiastical system, the religious system, will remain.

That system is here today, and it will stay here throughout the Tribulation. Many who have been denying the Word of GOD and the wrath of GOD and rejecting the love of GOD will find themselves under the wrath of GOD. But suddenly after the seven years of terrible Tribulation, GOD will bring an end to this ecclesiastical system with one great master stroke. The great commercial system on which so many are depending today will also come to an end. Even the political system will be abolished.

The Beast and the False Prophet, the Antichrist, will be cast alive into the great lake of fire. Finally even Satan will be cast into the bottomless pit, and there for one thousand years he will be imprisoned. At the end of the thousand years the lost will be brought into GOD's presence and judged. GOD does not give us all the details. He cannot because we could not understand them. Our finite minds cannot understand the greatness of GOD's love, the greatness of His work, or the terribleness of His wrath. But we have a picture which gives us a glimpse of the things to come.

A great invitation goes forth as all of these things come to a close and as the ecclesiastical system, the commercial system, the political system, the Beast, the False Prophet, the nations, and Satan are cast aside.

**"I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Revelation 18:4).**

This is the voice that is now ringing forth. GOD has opened the door of radio, the door of literature, and the door of the churches, that we might cry forth: "**Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and GOD hath remembered her iniquities**" (Revelation 18:4,5).

We call out that same invitation today. We invite you to come to JESUS CHRIST, who died for your sin. In coming days men will cry for the rocks to fall upon them and for the mountains and the caves to hide them from the face of Him who will come in His great wrath. They will want a place to hide, but they will find none.

JESUS is the only hiding place. Only faith in His atoning blood will give you the safety and security of His protecting care. Come to Him now. Accept His loving forgiveness and escape the wrath and the judgment to come.

~ end of chapter 6 ~

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