

**The Great Tribulation  
(Signs that it has come!)  
Matt 24:15-28 / Daniel 9 / Revelation 13, 19**

**Overview**

1. The test of a prophet (Deut 18:18-19)
2. The signs of the end-times – The Beginning of Sorrows
3. The Great Tribulation

***One of the most misunderstood aspects of Christianity is probably the teaching of Jesus and the prophets concerning the time called “The Great Tribulation.” One the one hand, the bible makes it pretty clear that this world-wide event will come to pass. On the other hand, many Christians have a hard time grasping the severity of death, disaster, and suffering that is described in the book of Revelation. As a result, some people explain away the event, saying that it is only ‘figurative’ and it will never come to pass literally. Others dismiss it as colorful fiction that the biblical writers made up. Some simply put it out of their minds and go about living their lives. Today we’ll see what Jesus has to say about it!***

***(Review 2 charts)***

15 "Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), 16 "**then** let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

- a. The “abomination of desolation” spoken of by Daniel the prophet.
- b. Daniel lays out in a vision he was given: "the vision of the seventy weeks."

***Dan 9:24-27***

*"Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times. And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.*

*The end of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined. Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes*

*desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate."*

4. This information, revealed to Daniel by the arch-angel Gabriel, reveals that God has marked off a period of 490 years (seventy weeks of years) for the nation of Israel, and the city of Jerusalem.
  - a. This time would begin when the Persian king, Artaxerxes, issued a commandment to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, which was fulfilled in 445 B.C. and chronicled in the account of Nehemiah.
  - b. The angel said that there would be first seven, and then sixty-two of those weeks (a total of 483 years) would end just before the Messiah would be "cut off."
    - i. From the day that Artaxerxes signed the proclamation for Nehemiah to rebuild the walls, to the day that Jesus Christ entered the city is exactly 483 years...
  - c. After "Messiah shall be cut off", the crucifixion of Christ, Titus destroyed Jerusalem and the temple.
5. Some say that this event was fulfilled between 167-164 BC when the Syrian king, Antiochus Epiphanes (the bright glory), desecrated the Temple in Jerusalem by sacrificing a pig on the altar of the temple.
6. This event was a prelude to an event that will occur in the middle of the tribulation, when another will enter into the temple and desecrate the it;
  - a. That man described by Daniel as the "coming prince", who is none other than the Anti-Christ

**Dan 8:23-25**

*"And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors have reached their fullness, a king shall arise, having fierce features, who understands sinister schemes. His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; he shall destroy fearfully, and shall prosper and thrive; He shall destroy the mighty, and also the holy people. "Through his cunning he shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule; And he shall exalt himself in his heart. He shall destroy many in their prosperity. He shall even rise against the Prince of princes; But he shall be broken without human means.*

- b. **3 ½ years into the Tribulation, the Anti-Christ will cause sacrifice and offering to end – and he will demand to be worshiped as God.**

**Rev 13:5-6**

*And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them.*

7. When this event happens, Jesus tells us, if you are in Judea you better leave!
8. One problem – Jesus speaks of the abomination of desolation – which requires a temple.
  - a. A new temple???? Many believe that deal is being worked on NOW.
  - b. As I told you last week, the Jews retook Jerusalem and the temple mount area in 1967, the spot on which the temple once stood now stands a Muslim mosque, The Dome of the Rock
  - c. Three days after capturing the temple mount, Israel allowed the Muslims to have oversight of the mosque, to “keep the peace”.
  - d. So with Israel in control of the temple area, but the Muslims in control of the Dome of the Rock, there seems to be a stalemate. Both sides want the land – no one seems willing to give in.
  - e. But something will happen. Scripture tells us that there will be another temple.
9. Remember Daniel tells us:

*Then he shall **confirm a covenant with many for one week**; but in the **middle of the week** he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate*

- a. Confirm a covenant – what is the one thing that would bring Israel to the bargaining table with the Palestinians? An agreement to rebuild the temple.
10. You can go right now to the web site of a group named “The Temple Institute”, which exists for the sole purpose of operating the temple *after it is rebuilt*.
  - a. They have identified and trained Levites to be priests
  - b. They have recreated all of the temple implements
  - c. They have even bred the proper Red Heifer
  - d. Many believe that the Jews are in possession of the Ark of the Covenant.

**11. Jesus tells us that when this event happens, it’s time to get out of town!**

17 Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house.  
18 And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. 19 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 20 And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.

12. This tells us there will be a suddenness with this event of the abomination of desolation – will happen suddenly!
- a. When the Jewish people see this – the Anti Christ going into the rebuilt temple, they better not go back for anything, but it is time to flee!
13. I don't believe Jesus is talking to Christians – some think that because Jesus is telling the reader to “flee” that Christians will have to go through the Tribulation.
- a. Jesus is speaking to His disciples, but none of them would live to see these things.
  - b. Jesus also mentions that they should pray that It does not occur on the Sabbath, when travel would be hindered. Christians would not be affected by this at all.
  - c. Jesus is speaking to “those who are in Judea” during the Tribulation.
14. We – Christians – will not be present when these things happen. We will have been removed from the earth. I'll go into more detail on this next week.

21 For then 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; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

15. Jesus here tells us that there will be “great tribulation”
- a. Our world has seen some terrible times;
    - i. The Black Death, which killed some 75-200 million people
    - ii. WWI, 16 million killed, ravaged a continent
    - iii. WW2, 60 million killed...

*Doing a little research, I ran across a group, the Einsatzgruppen, a group assembled by the German SS that would follow behind the German forces, and occupy the government offices of the towns and cities after they had been conquered. Their primary task was to kill anyone that they considered to be a possible threat to the Germans, as well as Jews, Gypsy's, priests, teachers, and anyone in the upper class. These people slaughtered millions.*

*, Hitler sent this group into Poland with orders for them to: "... send to death mercilessly and without compassion, men, women, and children of Polish race and language. Only in this way can we obtain the living space we need. Whatever we find in the shape of an upper class in Poland will be liquidated."*

- b. Think about this – a Jewish person would read this phrases; “great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be” and shudder...**

**16. Zech tells us that 2 out of 3 people in Israel will die during this time**

**Zech 13:8-9**

*And it shall come to pass in all the land," Says the LORD,  
"That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, but one-third shall be left in it:  
I will bring the one-third through the fire, will refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will answer them. I will say, 'This is My people'; and each one will say, 'The LORD is my God.'"*

**Zeph 1:2-3**

*"I will utterly consume everything from the face of the land," Says the LORD; 'I will consume man and beast; I will consume the birds of the heavens, the fish of the sea, and the stumbling blocks along with the wicked. I will cut off man from the face of the land," says the LORD.*

**17. So even looking at the worst times in human history, nothing, Jesus says, will come close to the events that will engulf the world during the Great Tribulation.**

- a. The Seal Judgments outlined in Rev 6; wars, famine, death, 25% of the worlds population dead.**
- b. The Trumpet Judgments of Rev 8-9; plant and marine life destroyed, fresh water defiled, demonic locusts, 1/3 of the earths population are killed.**
- c. Followed by the seven Bowl Judgments in Rev 15-16; loathsome sores, scorching heat, water turned to blood, darkness and pain, the grand finale being an earthquake the shakes then entire planet...**
- d. It will make those other terrible times seem like a day at the park in comparison.**
- e. Jesus tells us that were it not for the fact that Jesus returns and ends it all, nothing would survive.**

**18. As harsh as all of these things sound, Jesus is simply telling us the truth. He is like the weatherman telling us a category 5 Hurricane is coming.**

- a. Fact of the matter is – you don't want to be on this planet when it happens (all the more reason to get saved!)**
- b. It will be a terrible time to be alive, not only because of the judgments, but evil will reign. All restraint will be cast aside, and lawlessness will fill the earth.**

23 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it. 24 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. 25 See, I have told you beforehand. 26 "Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it.

**19. Note: Just because something is “miraculous” does not mean it is from the Lord... there will be plenty of “signs and wonders” leading up to and during the tribulation:**

**Rev 13:11-13**

*Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.*

**20. The revealing of true Messiah will not require any sign, or miracle, or proof whatsoever.**

27 For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 28 For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.

**21. Jesus is not talking about the rapture, which will not be apparent to the world other than the disappearance of millions of Christians (which in and of itself will throw the world into turmoil)**

**a. He is describing His coming at the end of the tribulation...**

**READ - Rev 19:11-21**

**b. And He is telling us this will not be an event you might miss – every person on the planet will know that it is happening.**

**c. And we'll talk about it next week!**

**22. For more detail on this, you can get my teaching of the book of revelation – web or CD.**

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