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At the end of every December, when Father Time's odometer is ready to click in another year, experts seem compelled to forecast what the coming year will bring. Economists read their econometric entrails and predict hard times or happy days accordingly; psychics announce that this is the year the San Andreas fault will pitch California into the sea. Well, before you believe any of this year's predictions, consider these vintage prognostications:

- *Octave Chanute, aviation pioneer*, in 1904: "The [flying] machine will eventually be fast; they will be used in sport, but they are not to be thought of as commercial carriers."
- *The Literary Digest*, 1889: "The ordinary 'horseless carriage' is at present a luxury for the wealthy; and although its price will probably fall in the future, it will never come into as common use as the bicycle."
- Thomas Edison, on electricity in the home: "Just as certain as death, [George] Westinghouse will kill a customer within six months after he puts in a system of any size."
- Lt. Joseph C. Ives, Corps of Topographical Engineers, 1861, on the Grand Canyon: "[It] is, of course, altogether valueless...Ours has been the first, and will doubtless be the last, party of whites to visit this profitless locality."
- *Science Digest*, August 1948: "Landing and moving around on the moon offer so many serious problems for human beings that it may take science another 200 years to lick them."
- Physicist and mathematician Lord Kelvin (1824-1907), who seemed to have a corner on the wrongheaded one-liner in his day: "X rays are a hoax." "Aircraft flight is impossible." "Radio has no future." - Paul Dickson, *The Future File*, Rawson Associates, Reader's Digest, January, 1996, p. 90.
- "Heavier-than-air flying machines are impossible." - Lord Kelvin, President Royal Society
- "Everything that can be invented has been invented." - Charles H. Duell, Director of U.S. Patent Office, 1899
- "Sensible and responsible women do not want to vote." - Grover Cleveland, 1905
- "There is no likelihood man can ever tap the power of the atom." - Robert Milikan, Nobel Laureate in Physics, 1923
- "Who the heck wants to hear actors talk?" Harry M. Warner, Warner Bros. Pictures, 1927, quoted in *Bits & Pieces*, March 30, 1995, pp. 9-10
- Theoretically, television may be feasible, but I consider it an impossibility—a development which we should waste little time dreaming about. - Lee de Forest, 1926, inventor of the cathode ray tube.
- I think there is a world market for about five computers. - Thomas J. Watson, 1943, Chairman of the Board of IBM
- We don't think the Beatles will do anything in their market. Guitar groups are on their way out. Recording company expert, 1962

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Lesson #5
Of Toil and Trouble
The Tribulation: Daniel's Seventieth Week
The Book of Revelation

Focus Scripture: Revelation 12; generally Revelation 4-18

Memory Verse:

Revelation 1:3 (NLT)

³ God blesses the one who reads this prophecy to the church, and he blesses all who listen to it and obey what it says. For the time is near when these things will happen.

What is the purpose of the Tribulation?

How much detail has God provided to us about the Tribulation?

Left Behind has been a phenomenal best selling book series. A fictionalized account of the Book of Revelation, it has captured the imagination of unbelievers as well as the faithful. We should understand from last week's study that the Tribulation's real focus is the cleansing of Israel. "Gentiles" will be saved during the Tribulation, a point that allows the novels to find a broad audience, but prophecy tell us that the point of the Tribulation is to save "national" Israel.

Remember: The church is not a player in the Tribulation.

The rapture of the church (1 Thess 4:16-17) and the removal of the restrainer of sin (2 Thess 2:1-12) allows the tribulation to commence. (We will look at the place of the church in more detail in our next lesson.)

The last "week" commences with the covenant between "the prince that shall come" (the beast from the sea (Rev 13:10) and Israel (Dan 9:27). Remember, a "week" equals seven years, so since Revelation is Daniel's last "week," the prophecies of Revelation cover basically a seven year period.

This “week” is described in great detail in Rev 4-19

Two purposes of the tribulation

To prepare Israel for her Messiah (Jer 30:7; Mal 4:5-6)

To judge the nations (Rev 3:10; Jer 25:32-33; Isa 26:21; 2 Thess 2:12)

The final form of Gentile world power is dictated by prophecy.

Outgrowth of the Roman Empire (Dan 2:41, 42)

Marked by division (Dan 2:41)

Contradiction of weak and strong, iron and clay (Dan 2:42)

Final form is future (Dan 2:44-45)

Union of ten kings and their kingdoms (Dan 7:7, 24)

One individual arises to take control (Dan 7:8, 24; Rev 13:1-10; 17:13)

This leader exercises worldwide influence of a blasphemous nature (Dan 7:23, 26)

The seat of authority seems to be Rome (Rev 17:9)

The final leader is given authority over all (Rev 17:8-13)

The purpose of the final kingdom is to make war against the Lamb (Rev 17:14)

This leader is the “prince that shall come” (Dan 9:26, 27)

Commonly called the “antichrist,” this leader is the beast from the sea (Is he a gentile?) (Rev 13:1-10)

Term antichrist only occurs in John’s epistles (1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2 John 7)

Reflects one who denies the person of Christ

“anti” means “instead of” or “against”

John’s passages show opposition rather than exchange, so John may be referring to a system of lawlessness rather than an individual (2 Thess 2:7)

This term needs to be compared to the “false Christs” one who affirm themselves to be the Christ (Matt 24:24; Mark 13:22)

In the context of Revelation 13, “false Christ” is more correct

His work is described throughout Scripture (Ezek 28:1-10; Dan 7:7, 8, 20-26;

8:23-25; 9:26-27; 11:36-45; 2 Thess 2:3-10; Rev 13:1-10; 17:8-14).

His rise to power is created / assisted by the "harlot" (Rev 17:3). However, he destroys this false system of religion so he may rule unhindered.

His satanic activity appears to be restricted to the last half of the tribulation.

He is aided by the false prophet, the "beast from the land or earth," the head of the false religious system, the "harlot" (Rev 13:11-27; 16:3; 19:20; 20:10)

Is the false prophet Jewish?

He receives his power from the first beast

He promotes the worship of the first beast

He has the power of death

He performs signs and miracles

He establishes the mark ("666") (Rev 13:18)

This period is referred to by a variety of titles in Scripture:

Tribulation / Day of the Lord / Jacob's Trouble / A Time of Judgment

Isa 2:2; 13:6, 9; Jer 30:7; Ezek 13:5; 30:3; Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14; Amos 5:18, 20; Mal 4:5; Acts 2:20; 1 Thess 5:2; 2 Thess 2:2; 2 Peter 3:10

"that day" "the day" "the great day" occurs over 75 times in the Old Testament

The tribulation covers the whole earth (Isa 34:2; 24:1, 4, 5, 16, 17, 18-21; Rev 3:10)

There will be a "falling away" (2 Thess 2:3)

This is pictured in the professing church of Laodecia (Rev 3:14-16). Organized religion will deny:

God (Luke 17:26; 2 Tim 3:4-5)

Christ (1 John 2:18; 4:3; 2 Peter 2:6)

Christ's return (2 Peter 3:3-4)

Faith (1 Tim 4:1-2; Jude 3)

Sound Doctrine (2 Tim 4:3-4)

A godly, separated life (2 Tim 3:1-7)

Christian liberty (1 Tim 4:3-4)

Morals (2 Tim 3:1-8, 13; Jude 18)

Authority (2 Tim 3:4)

Israel is at relative peace (Dan 9:27), but the first half of the tribulation is a time of chastisement (Matt 24:4-8; Rev 6)

Revelation relates to us that God will use three series of seven judgments each to punish the nations and cleanse national Israel. The first series of judgments commence in Revelation 6 (the "seals"):

First horseman equals peace and politics (6:2)

Second horseman equals war (6:3, 4) on a worldwide stage

Third and fourth horsemen represent the results of war (6:5-8)

The fifth seal represents death among the saints (6:9-11)

This raises the issue of salvation during the tribulation

Salvation occurs at both an individual and national level

The work of the Holy Spirit differs during the tribulation from the church age since He has been "removed" (2 Thess 2:7-8)

He still operates in and through men

The peculiar ministries of the church age – baptism, indwelling, sealing, and filling – have terminated with the rapture.

The operation of the Spirit is very similar to that of the Old Testament

The national salvation of Israel must be preceded by individual salvation (Rom 9:6; 11:26)

Salvation is by faith based upon the Cross (Heb 11:1-40)

The blood of the Lamb is the means of salvation during the tribulation (Rev 7:14; 14:4; 12:17)

The Gospel is preached during the tribulation (Matt 24:14)

The sealing of the 144, 000 is a sign of salvation (Rev 7)

There will be national salvation of Israel (Rev 19:11-20:6; Ezek 20:37-38; Zech 13:1, 8, 9; Rom 11:27)

Gentiles will be saved during the tribulation (Isa 2:2, 4; 60:3, 5; 62:2; Rev 7:9-17; Matt 13:47-50; 24:13, 31-36; John 3:1-21)

The sixth seal suggests a loss of control over men by reigning authority.

The seventh seal contains the next round of judgments.

The middle of the week brings persecution upon Israel (Matt 24:9; Rev 12:12-17)

The antichrist is the immediate cause of this persecution (Matt 24:15; 2 Thess 2; Rev 13:1-10; Dan 9:27)

The nation will flee from the land (Matt 24:16-20)

Unbelieving Israel will be deceived by the false prophet (Matt 24:11; Rev 13:11-18)

Believing Israel becomes a great witness to Christ (Matt 24:14)

God inserts a complete review of the history and prophecy of Israel pointing to the need for national repentance (Rev 12)

The Great Red Dragon is Satan (Rev 12:3; 20:2)

The man child is Christ (Rev 12:5—Psalm 2:8,9 is quoted here. cf. Rom 9:5)

The woman clothed with the sun is Israel (Rev 12:1)

The existence of a remnant of national Israel is necessary to fulfill the covenants.

The two witnesses of Rev 11:3-12 help with the process of removing Israel's spiritual blindness

The second half of the Tribulation, the period starting in the midst of the 70th week, is called The Great Tribulation and The Time of Jacob's Trouble (Matt 24:21; Jer 30:7).

Just as God has a plan for Israel, He also has a plan for the Gentiles

First Gentile prophecies come to Noah's sons (Gen 9:25-27)

Old Testament is replete with prophecies of judgment against the Gentile nations

Daniel's four world powers are Gentile (Dan 2, 7, 8)

Daniel 11 covers the Gentile period from Darius to the antichrist.

The "time of the Gentiles" is that period during which the Gentiles dominate Jerusalem (Luke 21:24). It started with 586 B.C. with the Babylonian exile.

The last seven years of Israel's history is also the last seven years of Gentile history.

The peace between Israel and the Beast is broken by an invasion of the northern confederacy (Dan 11:40)

This probably is the battle of Ezek 38, 39

Gog is the prince, so Magog is the land – possibly Russia?

Persia (Iran), Ethiopia, Put (Libya), Gomer (Germany), and Togarmah (Turkey or Armenia) are the allies (Ezek 38:5)

The king of the south also invades Israel – Egypt (Dan 11:40) Is this the Arab world of modern day?

This is the “campaign” of Armageddon (Rev 16:14). The Greek supports the concept of this term meaning a war or campaign as opposed to a single battle.

Is Armageddon the end of the world?

The campaign of Armageddon looks something like this:

In response to the invasion of the kings of the north and the south, the Beast, the willful king of Dan 11:36, invades the holy land (Dan 11:40)

The kings of the north and south unite against the Beast (Dan 11:40)

Jerusalem is destroyed (Zech 12:2)

The southern confederacy is destroyed by the Beast (Ezek 39; Zech 12:4)

The king of the north is defeated by the Lord (Ezek 39)

The Beast becomes an occupying force in Palestine (Dan 11:41, 42)

A coalition of Moab, Edom, and Ammon escape destruction (Rev 17:13)

The Beast expands into Egypt (Dan 11:43)

A report from “out of the east” causes the Beast great concern (Dan 11:44)

This is the news of the invasion march of the armies of the east (Rev 16:12)

The Beast moves his headquarters into Palestine for the final battle (Dan 11:45)

The Euphrates is supernaturally restrained (Rev 16:12)

The armies of the Beast and the kings of the east gather on the hill of Megiddo, or perhaps more properly the plains of Megiddon (Esdraelon) (See Zech 12:11)

There are great signs from heaven (Matt 24:30)

These signs cause the two armies to unite against the Lord (Rev 19:19)

The closing hostilities are described in Zech 14:3; Rev 16:17; Rev 11-21

The army of the Beast is defeated by the Second Coming of Christ (Rev 19:11-21)

Coincidental with, and as a part of, these battles, God continues His judgment program:

The trumpet judgments begin in the middle of the Tribulation and appear to cover the entire remaining period

First, judgment on the earth with a third of the inhabitants slain (Rev 8:7)

Second, a judgment upon the seas with a third of the inhabitants slain (Rev 8:8, 9)

Third, a judgment upon the rivers and fountains (fresh waters) (Rev 8:10, 11)

Fourth, a judgment upon the sun, moon and stars (Rev 8:12, 13). Since these are frequent symbols of government, this could be judgment upon world rulers.

Fifth, a judgment portrayed as the first woe, the locust from hell (Rev 9:1-12). Are these demons loosed to torment men? Could this be part of the northern confederacy of Ezek 38?

Sixth, the second woe is a great army turned loosed to march to Israel (Rev 9:13-19). Is this the army of the east marching against Israel (16:12)?

Seventh, the third woe opens the last set of judgments (11:15)

The seven bowl or vial judgments appear to cover a relatively brief period of time at the end of the tribulation.

First, the outpouring of wrath upon all Beast worshippers (16:2)

Second, the outpouring of wrath upon the sea (16:3). This might be the spiritual death of mankind, since "sea" frequently represents humanity.

Third, the outpouring of wrath upon the rivers and springs, causing them to lose their ability to sustain life (Rev 16:4-7)

Fourth, judgment on the sun (Rev 16:8, 9). This may be symbolic for the antichrist, "him" (16:8), suggesting God imposes blindness upon his followers.

Fifth, the Beast's kingdom is filled with darkness (Rev 16:10, 22)

Sixth, the drying up of the Euphrates Rivers so the kings of the east may invade (16:12)

Seventh, the fierce wrath of God is poured out to overthrow the affairs of men
(Rev 16:19)

There is a great judgment upon the professing church, Mystery Babylon, which entered
the tribulation (2:22; 3:10)

It is to be noted there are two Babylons pictured in Revelation

Ecclesiastical Babylon (17:1) is destroyed by political / economical Babylon
(17:16, 17) so that the Beast from the sea may be the sole object of worship (2
Thess 2:3, 4; Rev 13:15).

Political Babylon, the seat of the power for the Beast from the sea, is destroyed
by divine power (Rev 18:8).

This must precede the final battle, for earth dwellers bemoan Babylon's
destruction (18:9-19), while heaven rejoices (18:20-24).

Now, can you identify the antichrist? How?

What comes next?
