

THE GREAT TRIBULATION: INTRODUCTION AND EXODUS THEME (Session 8)

INTRO TO BIBLICAL PROPHECY TEACHING SERIES

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. We study Bible prophecies because they reveal Jesus' personality and plans. Jesus is looking for friends that want to know all of Him, not just the parts they like and understand. Who in this room and in this city can Jesus share His heart with? Who is willing to sit with Jesus as His friend to understand Him and partner with Him? In John 6, Jesus said hard things to His disciples, and as a result He lost some friends and only a few stayed with Him.
- B. We study Bible prophecies because they give us greater insight into what the Gospel is. Jesus wants to win our hearts through the dramatic love story of His 2nd coming. The more details we understand, the more our hearts get awakened in love for Jesus. We would never say, "Just tell me Jesus won on the cross and then don't tell me why He did it, what it accomplished for me, and how it applies to my life." No, we pursue the whole storyline of the Cross so that we get the revelation of Jesus. The same is true for the events surrounding His return.
- C. The greatest hour for the Church will be during the Great Tribulation. God is going to produce the optimal environment on the earth for people to choose Him and love Him with all of their hearts.
- D. The Great Tribulation is filled with hope and is good news for those who will believe in God. The GT is Jesus' final military assault on darkness as He prepares the earth for His takeover. ***Exodus theme: God is victorious and magnified, His people are delivered from oppression, His judgments are progressive warnings to unbelievers, His judgments are directed at unbelievers, and His people enter into the Promised Land.***

II. GREAT TRIBULATION TIME FRAME

- A. This is the second 3 ½ years of the Tribulation (7 years total – Daniel 9:27). The term "Great Tribulation" comes from Matthew 24:21 and Daniel 12:1. It will be the greatest tribulation the earth has ever seen.

For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor shall ever be. (Matthew 24:21)

And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation. (Daniel 12:1)

- B. The 3 ½ year length of time has been emphasized by God several times to make the point that's it literal and that it's a determined period of time. This time frame is the clearest time frame in the end-time storyline. Revelation says 1260 days, 42 months, and "times and times and half a time." Daniel says "times and times and half a time," half of 7 years, and 1290 days (1260+30 extra days).

“And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months.” (Revelation 11:2)

“And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.” (Revelation 11:3)

***Then the woman fled into the wilderness where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.* (Revelation 12:6)**

***But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.* (Revelation 12:14)**

***And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months.* (Revelation 12:14)**

***Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time (1 year) and times (2 years) and half a time (½ a year).* (Daniel 7:25)**

***Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week (7 years) he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.* (Daniel 9:27)**

***And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away (when the Antichrist stands up as God in the Temple), and the abomination of desolation is set up there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days (This is 30 more days than 3 ½ years).* (Daniel 12:11)**

- C. The book of Revelation (7 Seal Judgments, 7 Trumpet Judgments) is mostly describing the 3 ½ year Great Tribulation. The 7 Bowl Judgments describe Jesus' judgments right after the 3 ½ years as He marches up to Jerusalem to destroy every enemy army and establish His throne. Jesus' military march to Jerusalem may be within the 30 extra days that Daniel 12:11 mentions.
- D. The Great Tribulation is initiated by the Antichrist taking His place as god in the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem. Something like this happened around 170BC and 70AD. These past events were very small partial fulfillments that serve to confirm a future and literal Antichrist.

“Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place.” (Matthew 24:15)

The son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. (2 Thess 2:3-4)

1. He will declare Himself as god and demand global worship.
2. He will set up an idol of Himself that will be demonically controlled (abomination of desolation).

III. EXODUS THEME

“As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt, I will show them wonders.” (Micah 7:15)

- A. The Exodus is the most important event in Jewish history. The scriptures constantly look back to that event to remind God’s people of His power and faithfulness and that He will deliver them again. The 3 major Jewish feasts (Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles) are based on the events of the Exodus. Jesus’ life and work on the Cross parallel Moses and the Exodus. The Exodus theme is consistent in OT prophecies about Jesus’ return, and it’s the main theme of Revelation.
- B. We must view the Great Tribulation as God’s final military advancement against darkness, otherwise we will get too focused on the pressures and persecution that will happen. Defeatism, fear, and confusion set in if the primary perspective isn’t correct. This time frame is good news for the believer and good news for the earth because it’s when God is most active and powerful.
- C. ***God will be victorious and magnified*** – God will intervene in the most dramatic way in all of history. Because of this, the knowledge that He alone is God will spread across the earth. Reference Exodus and Ezekiel verses.

“And that you may tell in the hearing of your son and your son’s son the mighty things I have done in Egypt, and My signs which I have done among them, that you may know that I am the LORD.” (Exodus 10:2)

They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying; “Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints! Who shall not fear you, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy for all nations shall come and worship before You, for Your judgments have been manifested.” (Revelation 15:3-4)

- D. ***His people will be delivered from oppression*** – The purpose of the Great Tribulation is to confront darkness in order to deliver His people and the earth from oppression.
- E. ***Two Prophets confronting darkness*** – Moses and Aaron were God’s messengers to Pharaoh. They spoke for God and released plagues as confirmations to their message. They overwhelmed the magicians of the day. Two Prophets will stand in Jerusalem the entire 3.5 years without being harmed or hindered in any way. They will speak for God and release any plagues they want across the earth. They will be famous around the world because of their power.

And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with plagues, as often as they desire. (Revelation 11:5-6)

- F. ***Prayer releasing/pulling back God’s judgments*** – Moses and Aaron released God’s judgments through their words and staff and pulled them back through their intercession (Exodus 8:12-13). The Church, with the 2 Prophets, will release God’s judgments and pull them back through prayer. Prayer precedes each series of judgment (7 Seal Judgments – Rev 5:8; 7 Trumpet Judgments – Rev 8:1-5; 7 Bowl Judgments – Rev 15:1-8).

Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. 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....Then the angel took the censer and threw it to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake. (Revelation 8:3, 5)

G. *His judgments will be directed towards unbelievers* – God’s judgments (7 Trumpets, 7 Bowls) will be against the Antichrist kingdom and unbelievers. Egypt was destroyed by God, and the Antichrist empire will be destroyed by God during the Great Tribulation.

H. *There will be a distinction between God’s people and unbelievers* – God protected the Jews during the judgments of Egypt to preserve them but also as a witness to the Egyptians.

***Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, there was no hail.* (Exodus 9:26)**

***They did not see on another; nor did anyone rise from his place for three days. But all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.* (Exodus 10:23)**

***They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.* (Revelation 9:4)**

I. *His judgments will be progressive warnings to unbelievers* – The Exodus judgments were merciful in that they progressed in their intensity and impact and allowed time to respond to God. God’s judgments will be progressive and aimed at natural resources so that people can repent of their sins.

***He who feared the word of the LORD among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his livestock flee to the houses. But he who did regard the word of the LORD left his servants and his livestock in the field.* (Exodus 9:20-21)**

***And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their theft.* (Revelation 9:21)**

J. *He will raise up an Adversary* – Like Pharaoh, the Antichrist will be raised up as a hard-hearted man against whom God can fully display His power.

***“For at this time I will send all My plagues to your heart, and on your servants and on your people, that you may know that there is none like Me in all the earth....But indeed for this purpose I have raised you up, that My name may be declared in all the earth.”* (Exodus 9:14, 16)**

***And I will bring him to judgment with pestilence and bloodshed; I will rain down on him (Antichrist), on his troops, and on many peoples who are with him, flooding rain, great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. Thus I will magnify Myself and sanctify Myself, and I will be known in the eyes of many nations. Then they shall know that I am the LORD.”* (Ezekiel 38:22-23)**

K. *His people will enter into the Promised Land* – God brought the Jews out of bondage in order to make a covenant with them and bring them into the Promised Land of Israel. God will establish Israel as the glory of the nations. The land of Israel will be a paradise like the Garden of Eden.