

# Mystery of The Ages

## PART 15 - THE GREAT TRIBULATION OR THE 42 WEEKS

INTRODUCTION: During the first half of the Tribulation the first four seals (Rev. 6:1-8) are opened. During this time there will be a false peace instituted by the rider on the white horse (Rev. 6:2). The next three seals indicate that in spite of this peace the economic and political conditions of the world will rapidly disintegrate.

The last half of the Tribulation is often called "The Great Tribulation". In this study we shall try to outline the major events in the best chronological order possible.

### I. The "Sun-Clothed Woman"

In the "middle of the week" two "wonders" shall appear in heaven. The first wonder is a woman described in Rev. 12:1. This "Woman" is neither the Virgin Mary, nor the Church, but Israel. We have only to be reminded of Joseph's dream of the "sun" and "moon," and the "eleven stars" (Gen. 37:9) to see that this "Sun-Clothed Woman," with the "moon" under her feet and a crown of "Twelve Stars" upon her head is Jewish in character. Joseph was the twelfth star. Israel is again and again compared to a "married" woman in the Old Testament, but the Church is a "virgin," and an "espoused virgin" at that (2 Cor. 11:2). This "Woman" is described as being "with child" and "travailing to be delivered." When was the Church in such a condition? Paul says of Israel "Of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came" (Rom. 9:4,5). Israel looked forward to the time when she could say "Unto us a Child is Born, unto us a Son is given." (Isa. 9:6,7) But before that could happen Israel had to pass through many sore afflictions and judgments. These were her "Travail Time."

As the result of her "travail" the Woman brought forth a "Man-Child" who was to rule the nations with a "Rod of Iron." There can be no question as to who is meant by the "Man-Child". The second Psalm settles that. He is Christ, who at His ascension was caught up and seated on His Father's throne.

After her child is delivered, the Woman "flees into the wilderness" where she has a place prepared of God and where she is fed for 1260 days. Here is where many interpreters make a mistake. They overlook the fact that between the "fifth" and "sixth" verses of this chapter the present "Church Period" comes in. Here is the "gap" between the "Sixty-ninth" and "Seventieth" Weeks of Daniel's "Seventy Weeks." John jumps over this "gap," from the ascension of Christ to the casting out of Satan because he is not dealing in these Tribulation chapters with the Church but with Israel and wishes to continue her history without a break. Here is further evidence that the "Woman" is not the Virgin Mary, for she does not flee into Egypt, but into the Wilderness, neither does she flee "with" her

child, for the child was caught up to the throne of God; neither does she flee for her child's "protection," but for her own.

## II. The "Great Red Dragon"

(Rev. 12:9) removes all doubt as to who the great red dragon is - It is none other than Satan, who is the second wonder of (Rev. 12).

When the "Dragon" is cast out, knowing that his defeat has been brought about by the elevation of the "Man-Child" to the place of power, he will concentrate his hatred and malice on the "woman" (Israel) who gave Him birth. To the "Woman" will be given the "wings of a great eagle," that she may fly into the "Wilderness," into "her place," where she shall be nourished for a "Time, Times, and Half a Time," or 3 1/2 years. This takes us back to the flight of Israel from Egypt, of which God said - "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on 'Eagle's Wings,' and brought you unto myself." (Ex. 19:4) As the "Woman" and the "Dragon" are symbols, so are the "Eagle's Wings" (B-52s). They speak of the rapid and safe flight of the "Woman" (Israel) into the "Wilderness," where she shall be safely kept and nourished for 3 1/2 years until the "Dragon" is bound.

## III. The Fifth Seal - (Rev. 6:9-11)

When the Fifth Seal was broken John saw the "souls of martyrs" under the altar. These martyrs that John saw are not the martyrs of "past ages" that were taken up with the Church, but the martyrs who will be killed for the "Word of their Testimony, and who love not their lives unto the death" (Rev. 12:11) during the Tribulation. After the Church is caught out, the preaching of the "Gospel of the Kingdom" will be resumed (Matt. 24:14). As it is a proclamation that Christ is about to set up an "earthly kingdom," it will be exceedingly distasteful to Antichrist and his followers, and a "Great Persecution" will follow (Matt. 24:9-13). It is the "souls" of the martyrs of this persecution that John saw under the altar.

They asked that their death should be avenged but were told to rest for a "little season" until they were joined by their fellow servants and brethren who should die as they did. The promise is fulfilled in (Rev. 20:4).

## IV. The Sixth Seal - (Rev. 6:12-17)

When the Sixth Seal is broken great "physical changes" will occur on the earth (Joel 2:30,31; Matt. 24:29; Isa. 13:9-11). So terrible will these changes be that men will call upon the mountains and rocks to fall and hide them from the wrath of the Lamb. The twenty fourth chapter of Matthew should be compared with (Rev. 6:1-17).

Between the breaking of the "Sixth" and "Seventh" Seals there will be a pause or interval, during which 144,000 of the Children of Israel, 12,000 from each of the Twelve Tribes, will be "sealed." As there were 7000 in Ahab's time who would not bow the knee to Baal (1

Kings 19:18), so in the Tribulation there shall be 144,000 of Israel who will not bow the knee to Antichrist. They are "sealed" by an angel, and the "Seal" is the imprint of the "Father's Name" on their foreheads (Rev. 14:1; 22:4).

#### V. The Seventh Seal - (Rev. 8:1)

At the breaking of the "Seventh Seal" there will be "silence in heaven" for a limited period. This will be a period of preparation for the greater conflict to follow. Following the "Silence," seven angels in succession sound upon seven trumpets.

#### VI. The First Trumpet - (Rev. 8:7)

When the "First Trumpet" sounds "hail" and "fire mingled with blood" will be cast upon the earth and a "third part of the trees" and "all green grass" will be burnt up. This will be a fulfillment of (Joel 2:30,31). This is also a repetition of the "Seventh Egyptian Plague." (Ex. 9:22-26) That was "literal." Why should not this be?

#### VII. The Second Trumpet - (Rev. 8:8,9)

When the "Second Trumpet" sounds a "burning mountain," probably a meteor, will fall into the sea (Mediterranean) and will destroy a "third part of the creatures of the sea" and a "third part of the ships," probably some fleets assembled for a naval battle. A third part of the sea turns to blood.

#### VIII. The Third Trumpet - (Rev. 8:10,11)

When the "Third Trumpet" sounds a "great burning star," called "Wormwood," will fall from the heavens and poison the streams of fresh water. (See Jer. 9:13-15)

#### IX. The Fourth Trumpet - (Rev. 8:12)

When the "Fourth Trumpet" sounds the "third part" of the sun, moon and stars will be smitten and their light diminished a "third." This is one of the "signs" spoken of by Christ. (Lk. 21:25,26)

An angel will then fly through the midst of heaven announcing "Three Woes" that are to follow the sounding of the three trumpets yet to sound. (Rev. 8:13)

#### X. The Fifth Trumpet "First Woe": "The Plague of Locusts" - (Rev 9:1-3)

When the "Fifth Trumpet" sounds a "Star" will fall from heaven to the earth with the "key" of the "Bottomless Pit."

This is not a real star, but an angel who will look like a star, for "to him" was given the key. When the "Bottomless Pit" is opened a cloud, like smoke, of "locusts" will emerge and cover the earth. They will be a combination of horse, man, woman, lion and scorpion. These "Scorpion Locusts" have a king, which ordinary locusts have not (Prov. 30:27). This

king's name in the Hebrew is "Abaddon," but in the Greek is "Apollyon." The word means "destroyer."

#### XI. The Sixth Trumpet "Second Woe": "The Plague of Horsemen"- (Rev. 9:13-21)

When the "Sixth Trumpet" shall sound a voice from the "Golden Altar" will command the Trumpeter to loose "four angels" which are bound in the great river Euphrates. That they are "Bad Angels" is seen from the fact that they are "bound" and that they are the leaders of an army of 200,000,000 "Infernal Cavalry."

This Cavalry will not be composed of ordinary men and horses. The horses will have the "body" of a Horse, the "head" of a Lion, a "tail" like a serpent, with the "head of a serpent" at its end. Out of their mouths will issue "fire," "smoke" and "brimstone" and by these three the "third part of men will be killed" and the sting of their "serpent tails" will cause great pain. The riders upon these horses will have "breastplates of fire and brimstone" to match the breast of the horses.

#### XII. The Appearance - (Rev. 10)

Between the sounding of the Sixth and Seventh trumpets there will be an interval. During this interval a mighty angel will come down from heaven having a "little book" in his hand. This mighty angel will be Christ Himself for the description of Him corresponds with (Rev. 1:12-15), and as His voice is like that of a lion, this identifies Him as the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" (see Rev. 5:5; 10:3). This appearance will cause Israel to be converted by seeing Him, exactly as Paul was converted by seeing Him. There will be a brilliant light, brighter than the sun (exactly as the Transfiguration) when Jesus appears sometime in the Tribulation. (Ex. 43:2; Ps. 50:2) We do not know when in Daniel's 70th week this will take place. But a good guess would be about four months before the second Advent based on the book of Job which has forty-two chapters; the Lord appears to Job in the thirty-eighth chapter (Rapture of Tribulation Saints Matt. 24:36-44).

#### XIII. The Two Witnesses

In chapter (11:1-14) we are given a description of "Two Witnesses" who are to prophesy during the greater part of the last half of the week. Who they will be is very clear. One has "power to shut heaven that it rain not in the days of their prophecy." This can be no other than Elijah who was translated that he might come again before the "Great and Dreadful Day of the Lord" (Malachi 4:5,6) and who will shut up the heavens for 42 months, or 3 1/2 years, which is exactly the length of time he did it in the days of Ahab. The other Witness will "have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues as often as he will." This identifies him as Moses, for he is the only person mentioned in the Scriptures who had such power, and it was for this purpose that he was raised from the dead (Jude 9). As Moses and Elijah appeared together on the Mount of Transfiguration with Christ and as they probably were the two "men" in "white apparel"

(angel-like) that testified at the Ascension to Christ's coming again (Acts 1:10,11), it is also probable than that they are the "Two Witnesses" who will return to the earth to announce that Coming. During their "witnessing" they will have power to destroy their enemies with "fire that shall issue from their mouths", but at the end of 1260 days they will be slain and their bodies lay exposed in the streets of the city of Jerusalem for 3 1/2 days. They then shall rise and ascend to heaven, to the amazement of those who see them go. Their ascent will be followed by a destructive earthquake, which completes the Second Woe.

#### XIV. The Seventh Trumpet "Third Woe" - (Rev. 11:15-19)

The "Seventh Trumpet" includes all that follows down to the end of chapter nineteen. We must not forget in our study of the Book of Revelation that the "Seventh Seal" includes the "Seven Trumpets" and the "Seven Vials," and that the "Seventh Trumpet" includes the "Seven Vials," for the "Seventh Seal", and the "Seventh Trumpet," and the "Seventh Vial" all end alike with "voices," "thunderings," "lightnings" and an "earthquake" (Rev. 8:5, 11:19; 16:18).

#### XV. The Vials - (Rev. 16)

The first five vials find great similarity either in the seals and the trumpets or the Egyptian plagues. The sixth vial (Rev. 16:12-14) is poured out upon the river Euphrates so that its waters dry up and the armies of the east are allowed to come westward to prepare for the battle of Armageddon (Isa. 11:15,16).

When the Seventh Vial is poured out, a great voice, probably the voice of the One who cried on the Cross - "It is Finished," will cry - "It is Done," and there will be a "Great Earthquake" that will divide into three parts the "Great City" and the cities of the Nations (the ten Federated Nations). London, Rome, Paris, etc., and "Great Babylon", that shall be rebuilt by that time, and whose destruction by an earthquake is foretold in chapter eighteen, will fall. This earthquake is foretold by the Prophet Zechariah (Zech. 14:4,5).

In the "Great Hail" that will fall on men, every stone of which shall weigh 100 pounds, we have a repetition of the "Seventh Egyptian Plague" (Ex. 9:13-35). Hail has been one of God's engines of war. He used it to discomfit the enemies of Israel at Beth-horon in the days of Joshua (Josh. 10:11). The law required that the "blasphemer" should be "stoned" (Lev. 24:16), and the "Blasphemers" of the "End Time" shall be stoned from heaven.

In the Book of Revelation in chapters seventeen and eighteen, between the pouring out of the Vials and the "Battle of Armageddon" which ends the "Tribulation Period," there is an account of the destruction of a "religious system" called "Mystery, Babylon the Great," and a city called Babylon.

#### XVI. The Great Harlot

The woman of (Rev. 17) can be none other than the Roman Catholic Church. She is a religious system riding upon a political vehicle. The revived Roman Empire of Daniel 2 will provide the necessary tool for the confederation of church and state which the Antichrist will rule. It's interesting that the old Roman Empire is essentially the same as today's European Common Market which includes ten nations that are all predominately Catholic. Just a coincidence - eh? The woman will find her destruction within the very political machine she chooses to ride - (Rev. 17:16-18).

#### XVII. The Battle of Armageddon - (Rev. 19:11-21)

The "Tribulation Period" will close with the great "Battle of Armageddon." As we have seen the armies of the East and the West will be assembled in the Holy Land by the "Demon Spirits" that shall be sent forth from the mouths of the "Satanic Trinity." The field of battle will be the "Valley of Megiddo," located in the heart of Palestine, the battlefield of the great battles of the Old Testament. The forces engaged will be the "Allied Armies" of Antichrist on the one side, and the "Heavenly Army" of Christ on the other. The "time" will be when the "Harvest of the Earth" IS RIPE (Rev. 14:15), and at the "Psychological Moment" when the "Allied Armies" of Antichrist are about to take the city of Jerusalem.

The Prophet Zechariah says - "Behold the 'Day of the Lord' cometh." When - "I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle... then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations" (Zech. 14:1-3).

This "going forth" is graphically described in (Rev. 19:11-21). When He came the first time to Jerusalem as King, He rode on a "colt," the foal of an ass, (Matt. 21:1-11), this time He shall come on a "White Horse." His eyes will be as a "flame of fire" and on His head shall be "many crowns," and He shall be clothed in a vesture "dipped in blood." Not His own blood, but the blood of His enemies. The Prophet Isaiah foresaw that day:

"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength?" And the answer comes back - "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." Then the Prophet asks, "Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?" And the response is - "I have trodden the wine press alone; and of the people there was none with me; for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment." (Isa. 63:1-6)