

## *Session 4 Three Prophetic Time Frames in the End Times*

### I. THREE PROPHETIC TIME FRAMES

A. There are three time frames related to the final 7 years of this age and two key dates—Israel becoming a nation (1948) and gaining control over Jerusalem (1967). The three time frames are the *beginning of birth pains* (possibly starting in 1948 or 1967), *worldwide counterfeit peace and safety* (3½ years), and the *Great Tribulation* (3½ years; see Dan. 9:27; Mt. 24:8; 1 Thes. 5:2-3).

B. These three time frames occur in one generation. When *all the signs* described by Jesus (Mt. 24) accelerate in the same generation, believers are to *know* that they are living in the generation that He will return (Mt. 24:33-34). A generation in Scripture may last 100 years (Gen. 15:13-16).

<sup>33</sup>*When you see all these things, know that it is near <sup>34</sup>...this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place...<sup>36</sup>Of that day and hour no one knows... (Mt. 24:33-36)*

1. The first mention of *all these things* (24:33) refers to those occurring *before* and *during* the Great Tribulation as described in 24:5-28, starting with the beginning of birth pains.

<sup>8</sup>*All these are but the beginning of the birth pains. (Mt. 24:8; ESV).*

2. The second mention of *all these things* (24:34) refers to the things that occur *after* the Great Tribulation, related to Jesus coming on the clouds to the earth (Mt. 24:29-31).

<sup>29</sup>*Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light...<sup>30</sup>The sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will...see the Son of Man coming on the clouds...<sup>31</sup>He will...gather together His elect...from one end of heaven to the other. (Mt. 24:29-31)*

## II. BEGINNING OF BIRTH PAINS: 1<sup>ST</sup> PROPHETIC TIME FRAME BEFORE JESUS RETURNS

- A. Jesus, the apostles, and the OT prophets prophesied various signs of the times that will alert God's people (who are alive in the generation that Jesus returns) that His return is imminent. For the first time in history, **most** of these are increasing and making headline news globally.
- B. Jesus identified 12 negative "sign trends" and one positive trend (gospel preached in all nations) that will characterize this time (Mt. 24:4-8, 14; Mk. 13:5-8; Lk. 21:7-18)—**false christs, war, ethnic conflict** (nation [ethnos] against nation), **economic warfare** (kingdom against kingdom), **famines, pestilences, earthquakes, troubles** (Mk. 13:8), **commotions** (chaotic events; Lk. 21:9), **fearful sights** (Lk. 21:11), **signs from heaven** (Lk. 21:11), and **persecution** (Lk. 21:12-19).  
<sup>3</sup>...**"Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"**...<sup>5</sup>**"For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.** <sup>6</sup>**And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars...** <sup>7</sup>**For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes...**<sup>8</sup>**All these are the beginning of sorrows** [birth pains, ESV, NIV]. (Mt. 24:3-8)
- C. The earth will go through a "birth canal," resulting in a new world order—**the Millennium**.
- D. During this time, also watch for the following political and religious developments:
1. The emergence of a **10-nation confederation** to form the basis of a **world government** (Rev. 17:12). The political, military, and economic alliance of these ten nations will provide the Antichrist with the greatest power and resource base of any leader in history.
  2. **Rebuilding of the ancient city of Babylon** as a global religious and economic center (Rev. 17-18). The ancient city of Babylon, once on the Euphrates River in Iraq, about 50 miles south of Baghdad, will be restored and used by the Antichrist (Jer. 50-51).
  3. The emergence of Harlot Babylon as **worldwide religion** of great tolerance (Rev. 17) made up of people from Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc.
  4. **Rebuilding the temple** in Jerusalem and offering animal sacrifices (as Moses taught).
  5. A regional **political leader** who establishes peace in the Middle East (Dan. 9:27).

### III. WORLDWIDE COUNTERFEIT PEACE AND SAFETY: 2<sup>ND</sup> PROPHETIC TIME FRAME

- A. Paul prophesied a “counterfeit peace and safety” that will end suddenly when the destruction associated with the Great Tribulation begins (1 Thes. 5:3). This counterfeit time of peace will continue for the **first 3½ years** of the final 7 years of this age.

<sup>2</sup>*For you yourselves know perfectly that the Day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.*

<sup>3</sup>*For when they say, “**Peace and safety!**” then **sudden destruction** [Great Tribulation] comes upon them, **as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. They shall not escape.** (1 Thes. 5:2-3)*

- B. The counterfeit peace will be the result of the Antichrist negotiating a *peace treaty* between Israel and the Islamic nations (Dan. 9:27). Initially, the Antichrist will be seen as a man of peace.

<sup>27</sup>*Then he [Antichrist] shall **confirm a covenant** [peace treaty] **with many** [Israel and Islamic nations] **for one week** [7-years]; **but in the middle of the week** [after 3½ years] **he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering** [breaking his covenant with Israel]. (Dan. 9:27)*

- C. A worldwide religious network referred to as the **Harlot Babylon** will be operating during this time. It will be a religion of toleration, without absolutes. The kings of the earth will participate in it. One aspect of this new religion is that it will have the power to kill the saints who oppose it.

<sup>6</sup>*I saw the woman [Harlot Babylon], **drunk with the blood of the saints...** (Rev. 17:6)*

1. At this time, believers will be hated by all nations for exposing the truth about her.

<sup>9</sup>*They will...**kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake.** (Mt. 24:9)*

2. The ten kings that serve the Antichrist will destroy the Harlot religion at the beginning of Great Tribulation (Rev. 17:16). The Harlot religion of tolerance will be replaced with Antichrist worship—a religion of intolerance—demanding all to worship the Antichrist.

#### IV. THE GREAT TRIBULATION: 3<sup>RD</sup> PROPHETIC TIME FRAME BEFORE JESUS RETURNS

- A. The Great Tribulation will begin in the middle of the final 7 years of this age and will last for 3½ years. It will be the most difficult and the most important 3½ years in human history.

*<sup>21</sup>For there will be **great tribulation**, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. <sup>22</sup>Unless those days were shortened, **no flesh would be saved** [physically]; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened. (Mt. 24:21-22)*

- B. **Optimum environment:** God will establish the optimum environment for His people to walk in love and purity. What Satan means for evil, God will use for good to train His people. *God uses the least severe means to bring the greatest number of people to the deepest level of love.*

*<sup>28</sup>And we **know that all things work together for good to those who love God...** (Rom. 8:28)*

- C. **Healing of the head wound:** The dramatic healing of the Antichrist's head wound will be the catalytic event that launches the Antichrist into world prominence (Rev. 13:3, 12, 14). The Antichrist is seemingly killed and healed, causing the nations to marvel at him (Rev. 13:3).

- D. **Abomination of desolation:** The Antichrist will declare himself to be God. The False Prophet will set an image of the Antichrist in the Jerusalem temple and demand all to worship him.

*<sup>15</sup>"Therefore when you see the '**abomination of desolation**'...standing in the holy place... <sup>16</sup>Then let those who are in Judea flee...<sup>21</sup>For then there will be **great tribulation**, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time..." (Mt. 24:15-21)*

*<sup>15</sup>...cause as many as would **not worship the image of the beast to be killed.** (Rev. 13:15)*

*<sup>4</sup>...so that he [Antichrist] sits as God in the temple of God, **showing himself that he is God.** (2 Thes. 2:4)*

- E. The archangel Michael and his angels will cast Satan and his demons to the earth, resulting in an open heaven for the Church (Rev. 12:7-12).

*<sup>7</sup>And **war broke out in heaven**: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon...<sup>9</sup>So the great dragon...called the Devil and Satan...was **cast to the earth**, and his angels [demons] were cast out with him...<sup>12</sup>Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having **great wrath**, because he knows that he has a short time." (Rev. 12:7-12)*

- F. During the final 3½ years of this age, two prophets living in Jerusalem will do mighty miracles (Rev. 11:3-6).

*<sup>3</sup>**I will give power to My two witnesses**, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days [3½ years]...<sup>6</sup>These have power to shut heaven...and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire. (Rev. 11:3-6)*

## V. JESUS' SECOND COMING: HIS ROYAL PROCESSION TO JERUSALEM

- A. Jesus will make a royal procession to His throne in Jerusalem. It will be a **3-stage procession** that includes many events—He will travel **across the sky**, then **on the land** through Jordan (Edom), then **into Jerusalem** (after standing on the Mount of Olives) to be crowned King.
- B. **Stage #1 Across the sky:** Jesus' procession across the sky will be seen in every inhabited place on earth. He will travel in glory on a cloud as **He raptures the Church** and is **seen by every eye** (Rev. 1:7). What height and speed will He travel at so as to be recognizable to people on earth?  
<sup>7</sup>**Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him...and all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him... (Rev. 1:7)**  
<sup>29</sup>**Immediately after the tribulation...<sup>30</sup>The sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will...see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven...**  
<sup>31</sup>**He will...gather together His elect...from one end of heaven to the other. (Mt. 24:29-31)**
- C. **Stage #2 On the land:** Jesus will travel through Edom (modern Jordan) to destroy His enemies in a military conflict on His way to Jerusalem (Isa. 63:1-6; Hab. 3:12; cf. Ps. 45:3-5; 110:5-6).  
<sup>1</sup>**Who is this who comes from Edom [Jordan]...traveling in the greatness of His strength?...**  
<sup>2</sup>**Why is Your apparel red...like one who treads in the winepress? <sup>3</sup>"I have trodden the winepress...their blood is sprinkled upon My garments; I have stained all My robes." (Isa. 63:1-3)**  
<sup>13</sup>**He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood...<sup>15</sup>He Himself treads the winepress of the... wrath of Almighty God...<sup>19</sup>I saw the beast [Antichrist], the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him [Jesus]...<sup>20</sup>The beast was captured and with him the false prophet...<sup>21</sup>The rest [kings of the earth] were killed with the sword... (Rev. 19:15-21)**
- D. **Stage #3 Into Jerusalem:** Jesus will make His royal procession into Jerusalem to be crowned as King. He will split the Mount of Olives to rescue His people parallel to the dividing of the Red Sea as in the days of Moses (Zech. 14:1-5). Israel's leaders will recognize Him as Messiah (Mt. 23:39), opening the gates of Jerusalem to receive Him as their long-awaited King (Ps. 24:7-10).  
<sup>2</sup>**I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem...<sup>3</sup>Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations...<sup>4</sup>His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives...and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two...making a very large valley...<sup>5</sup>Then you shall flee through My mountain valley...The LORD my God will come, and all the saints with You. (Zech. 14:1-5)**  
<sup>39</sup>**You shall see Me no more till you say, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD." (Mt. 23:39)**  
<sup>7</sup>**Lift up your heads, O you gates [Jerusalem]! The king of glory shall come in. <sup>8</sup>Who is this king of glory? The Lord strong and...mighty in battle [Armageddon]. (Ps. 24:7-8)**