



## Sermon Series Notes

### “The Great Tribulation & the Grace of God” (Revelation 6-7)

Danny Hodges – NT3600

Biblical prophecy is fascinating to me. And it assures me that I have the right handle on truth. You see, no other religious book has the foundation of prophecy like the Bible.

Babylonian captivity 70 years (Jer.25:11; Dan.9:1-2)

Cyrus (Ezra 1:1-3; II Chron.36:22-23; Isa.44:28)

Israel’s bondage in Egypt 400 years (Gen.15:13)

Jesus born of a virgin (Isa.7:14)

Birthplace of Jesus (Micah 5:2)

Taken to Egypt to escape Herod (Hosea 11:1; Matt.2:13-15)

Herod’s order to kill the babies (Matt.2:18; Jer.31:15 A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more).

Jesus betrayed by a friend for thirty pieces of silver, money thrown into the temple, used to buy The Potter’s Field (Zech.11:12-13; John 13:18; Matt.27:5-7)

Jesus would die on a cross (Psalm 22:16)

Disciples deserting Jesus (Matthew 26:31...This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written: Zech.13:7 I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered; Matthew 26:56 But all this had taken place that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples deserted him and fled. Mocked, spit upon, beard pulled out (Isa.50:6 I offered my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard; I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting; Mark 10:34; 14:65; 15:19).

Numbered with transgressors (Isa.53:12)

Gambling for Jesus’ clothing (Psalm 22:18; John 19:23-24)

Offered a drink while on the cross (Psalm 69:21; John 19:28-29).

Jesus assigned a grave with the wicked, & the rich in death (Isa.53:9; Matt.27:57-60).

Legs not broken, pierced (John 19:31-34, 36-37; Ex.12:46; Num.9:12; Psalm 34:20; Zech.12:10).

Daniel 9:24-27

- 49 years (Neh.2, Artaxerxes)
- 434 years later, the Cross
- Parenthesis (Eph.3:5-6), the Church Age
- 7 years, The Great Tribulation

See Daniel 9:24-27; This is one of the most incredible prophecies in the entire Bible, and it ties in with where we are in our study of Revelation. The weeks here refer to weeks of years totaling 490 years. These years are divided into three sections: 49, 434, and 7. The first 49 years began when Artaxerxes gave

permission for Nehemiah to rebuild of the temple in Jerusalem (Neh.2). It took a total of 49 years, and those years were full of opposition and trouble (just read Nehemiah). The second 434 years ended when Jesus died on the cross. Sir Robert Anderson, former head of the Criminal Investigation Department of Great Britain (Scotland Yard), and a serious student of the Old Testament, detailed the chronology of these years in his book ***The Coming Prince***. The final 7 years are known as The Great Tribulation, as well as “the time of Jacob’s Trouble” (Jer.30:7). There is a parenthesis of time between Messiah being “cut off” and this 7 year period. In Eph.3:5 Paul the apostle says that this period was not made known to the OT saints. We refer to this period as “the church age.” The end of the church age will mark the beginning of the “Great Tribulation.” The church age ends when the church is raptured (Rev.4:1).

In Mathew 24 & Mark 13 Jesus refers to The Great Tribulation. Mark’s record tells us that Peter, James, John, and Andrew privately asked Jesus what will be the sign of his coming, and of the end of the age. In his answer he describes events that will lead up to the Tribulation (Nation will rise against nation, earthquakes, famine). These are “the beginning of birth pains.” Then he mentions Daniel’s prophecy of the abomination of desolation. This is when the antichrist sets himself up in the temple in Jerusalem and claims to be God (II Thess.2:4). This happens during the seven years of The Great Tribulation. He then says “...those will be days of distress unequaled from the beginning when God created the world, until now – and never to be equaled again. If the Lord had not cut short those days, no one would survive. But for the sake of the elect, whom he has chosen, he has shortened them.”

After the messages to the churches in Revelation 2 & 3, John is caught up to heaven (raptured). He sees in heaven the Father seated on His throne, with a seven sealed scroll in his right hand. A mighty angel asks who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll, but no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth comes forward. John weeps long and hard, which tells us he knew something about what is contained in this scroll. It contains events that bring about the completion of the redemption of all creation. John is told not to weep, because the Lion of the tribe of Judah has triumphed and is able to open the scroll. John turns to see the Lion, but instead sees a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain. All of a sudden an angelic chorus sings a song that acknowledges this Lamb’s worthiness to take the scroll and open its seals (Read Rev.5:9-10). The initial choir is joined by an innumerable number of angels, and the singing continues (Read Rev.5:12). Just when you think it could not get any louder or any more glorious, John hears every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and on the sea, singing (Read Rev.5:13b).

As the Lamb opens the first of the seven seals, the attention swings back to earth, and the events that begin to unfold are the antithesis of the glorious anthems going on in heaven. The Great Tribulation begins.

6:1-2 There are two riders on white horses who wear crowns in Revelation. See Rev.19:11-16. The rider here in Rev.6 carries a bow (instrument of war), whereas Christ has no weapon but the “sword of his mouth” (Rev.19:15); This rider is given a crown, whereas Christ already has many crowns (Rev.19:12); This rider’s crown is a ***stephanos*** (“victor’s wreath”), whereas Jesus wears the ***diadema*** (“royal crown”). This is not Christ but a false Christ. In Revelation 13, 16, 17, 19 & 20 he is called the “beast,” in II Thess.2 “the man of lawlessness,” in John 17 “the son of perdition,” in Daniel 11 the king who does “as he pleases.” We know him best as the antichrist (I John 4:3). David Jeremiah calls him the “Dark Prince on a White Horse.” Daniel 7:23 says that he will rule a future kingdom that will “devour the whole earth, trampling it down and crushing it.” But his power and rule will be short lived (according to Daniel 7:25 a brief three and a half years).

6:3-4 This is world war such as never has been in all of history, and never will be again. There is no mention of bloodshed when the first rider comes on the scene. This fits with prophecies about antichrist, that his true colors are not immediately seen. Daniel 9:27 says that he will break a covenant with Israel after three and a half years, and that is when the events of this tribulation period really intensify. Ten million people died in WWI, 20 million in WWII, 6 million of those Jews. But this coming world war will be unlike anything in all of history, and never to be repeated again.

6:5-6 This is famine, and the only ones not affected at this time are the very wealthy. Famine always follows the devastation of war, especially a war like this one.

6:7-8 One fourth of the world's population will die. It is impossible to completely fathom what this will be like. When we get to Rev.9:13-16 we are told that another third of the remaining population perishes, so that means 50% of the people on the planet die in this terrible time! At 9:17 a.m. Saturday morning the population of the world was 7,193,280,515. If the Tribulation period happened now that would mean 3,596,640,257 would die. To put that into perspective, at 9:17 am Saturday morning, the population of the U.S. was 318, 922,263. So a little more than 11 times the population of the U.S. would perish. I have little doubt that nuclear weapons will be used in this final world war.

II Peter 3:7 By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men...10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.

One writer comments about this coming day: "Death rides roughshod over the world's population, while Hades personified, walks alongside, gobbling up the carcasses."

See Isaiah 24:1-3, 11, 13, 19-20

6:9-11 Those in Iraq, other lands of the Middle East, and around the world who have been killed solely because of their faith in Jesus Christ are part of those referred to here. And according to this Scripture, others will be joining them.

Matt.10:28 Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

6:12-14 Hebrews 12:25-29; Haggai 2:6

6:15-17 The famine that comes when the third seal is opened does not affect the very wealthy, but their money does not help them for very long!

Just so we are not confused, these future events are given to us in a wide angle panorama, then detailed snapshots follow.

These events are not motivated by human anger. This is the measured response of the moral government of the universe; See Rev.15:1; 16:1, 4-7.

But before all these cataclysmic events completely unfold, God pours out His mercy on a multitude of people living in this awful time. Read Revelation 7. The seals? (Eph.1:11-14; 4:30; II Cor.1:21-22). A multitude of people have the hell scared out of them and are saved! See Habakkuk 3:2b.

While a multitude come to Christ during this terrible time, a multitude also remain hardened and refuse God's gracious offer of salvation. See Rev.14:6; 16:9-11.

How close are we to the end?

- Israel reborn as a nation
- Allies to fulfill Ezekiel 37 & 38
- Technology for the mark of the beast
- Modern military (as described by Joel, Revelation, other prophets)
- Nuclear weapons
- Jews prepared to reinstate temple worship
- No Scripture needs to be fulfilled for the rapture to happen
- Gospel to every nation through angel of Rev.14:6; Matt.24:14

## CONCLUSION

Even in the tragic closing hours just prior to Christ's second coming, countless souls will be saved. John 3:16.

But what if the opening of this seven sealed scroll is yet 100 years into the future? In 100 years, we're all gonna be dead. See Heb.9:27; Eccl.3:11. God gives each one of us a choice concerning our eternal destiny. Receive forgiveness of sin by repenting & receiving Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, or be damned. What's your choice?