

Sunday December 7th 2014
From Here To Eternity
Part Ten

1). Mt 24:15 *"Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), 16 "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.*

a). Last week we had begun to put together the sequencing of the events that take place immediately prior to the mid-point in the Tribulation through to the events that immediately follow this mid-point.

b). The mid-point itself being marked by the man of sin breaking his counterfeit covenant of peace with Israel as we see in - *Da 9:27 Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week [the counterfeit covenant of peace]; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate.....'*

This is the same point in time, having broken the covenant, when he enters the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem and declares himself to be God as we have seen in *2Th 2:4b.....so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. 5 Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?*

The same point in time when his armies surround Jerusalem, prior to the city's destruction as recorded in - *Lu 21:20 ¶ "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near.*

c). Immediately preceding this mid-point we had seen Satan cast out of heaven, who then, being confined to the earth, gives all that he has to his son - *Re 13:2 Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.*

d). We had seen the beast killed and then raised from the dead - *Re 13:3 And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed.*

e). And the death and resurrection of the 2 witnesses - *Re 11:7 When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them.....11 Now after the three-and -a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood*

on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. 12 And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them.

f). And of course with the completion of the ministry of the 2 witnesses the full number of the 144000 is also completed and they are sealed –
Isa 66:7 "Before she was in labor, she gave birth; Before her pain came, She delivered a male child. [the 144000] 8 Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion was in labor, She gave birth to her children. 9 Shall I bring to the time of birth, and not cause delivery?" says the LORD. "Shall I who cause delivery shut up the womb?" says your God.

The 144000 are the first fruit to God from a fully redeemed nation, a nation that is described as being born 'in one day' and 'born at once', at the conclusion of the Great Tribulation, a redemption made certain through the promise given in v9. In these verses then we see Israel giving birth before the Great Tribulation begins and then the remnant of the nation experiencing birth at the Great Tribulation's end.

g). Now, immediately following the mid-point, we see a portion of the nation of Israel supernaturally taken to a place of safety which God has prepared for them - *Re 12:14 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.*

h). The 144000 are caught up to God and His throne - *Re 12:5 She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne.*

i). And those of the nation who remain experience the fullness of the wrath of the man of sin - *Lu 21:24 "And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.*

2). We now find ourselves in the time of the opening of the second seal on the 7 sealed scroll and that associated with the rider on the red horse –

Re 6:3 ¶ When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, "Come and see." 4 Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword.

And this is how this same rider is described in the Book of Daniel –

Da 11:36 *"Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath [the Tribulation] has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done. 37 "He shall regard neither the God of his fathers nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all. 38 "But in their place he shall honor a god of fortresses; and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things. 39 "Thus he shall act against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god, which he shall acknowledge, and advance its glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and divide the land [Israel] for gain.*

a). The rider on the fiery red horse we will remember is still the Antichrist, but that which he has now done in setting his hand against the Jewish people has set in motion a chain of events that the Lord Himself describes as, 'Great Tribulation', an unprecedented time of trouble upon the earth such as has never been seen before and will never be seen again.

b). And that which we see during these 3 ½ years of the greatest tribulation the earth has ever experienced are the out workings of that which the scriptures have foretold from the beginning.

c). We will remember that which the Lord had promised Israel if they would not serve Him, recorded in - De 28:47 *"Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and gladness of heart, for the abundance of everything, 48 "therefore you shall serve your enemies, whom the LORD will send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in need of everything; and He will put a yoke of iron on your neck until He has destroyed you. 49 "The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flies, a nation whose language you will not understand, 50 "a nation of fierce countenance, which does not respect the elderly nor show favor to the young. 51 "And they shall eat the increase of your livestock and the produce of your land, until you are destroyed; they shall not leave you grain or new wine or oil, or the increase of your cattle or the offspring of your flocks, until they have destroyed you.....64 "Then the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods, which neither you nor your fathers have known-wood and stone. 65 "And among those nations you shall find no rest, nor shall the sole of your foot have a resting place; but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing eyes, and anguish of soul. 66 "Your life shall hang in doubt before you; you shall fear day and night, and have no assurance of life. 67 "In the morning you shall say, 'Oh, that it were*

evening!' And at evening you shall say, 'Oh, that it were morning!' because of the fear which terrifies your heart, and because of the sight which your eyes see. 68 "And the LORD will take you back to Egypt in ships, by the way of which I said to you, 'You shall never see it again.' And there you shall be offered for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no one will buy you."

That which we see here in these verses from Deuteronomy Chapter 28 is the very thing pictured through Zion being in labor from Isaiah Chapter 66 – the very same thing we see described in - Mt 24:7 *"For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. 8 "All these are the beginning of sorrows [literally the pain associated with giving birth]. 9 "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake.*

And this is also referenced in Mark Chapter 13.

d). But, as the scriptures also foretold from the beginning, the birth pangs that Israel is to suffer is for the purpose of bringing forth life, to give birth to a cleansed and redeemed nation through whom all the nations of the earth shall be blessed – again this is exactly what we saw in Isaiah 66:9 – the same thing which we will remember from - Mal 3:3 *He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, And purge them as gold and silver, That they may offer to the LORD An offering in righteousness.*

e). And that which Paul alludes to in - Ro 11:11 *I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles. 12 Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness!*

f). Then, in conjunction with this, we must see the judgment poured out upon the Gentile nations under Antichrist as fulfillment of the promises that we have seen, firstly given to Cain in - Ge 4:15 *And the LORD said to him, "Therefore, whoever kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold." And the LORD set a mark on Cain, lest anyone finding him should kill him.* And then given to Abraham in - Ge 12:3 *I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you;*

g). And the judgmental response that must come from dividing the land of Israel for gain, as we saw in Daniel Chapter 11, the land which God calls His own - Joe 3:2 *I will also gather all nations, And bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; And I will enter into judgment with them there On account of My*

people, My heritage Israel, Whom they have scattered among the nations; They have also divided up My land.

h). This complete picture, encompassing God's judgment on Israel and the Gentile nations, is given to us in an overview through that recorded in Revelation Chapter 6 with the opening of the first 4 seals on the 7 sealed scroll. Before we review this however, there is one more thing to note.

3). It might be of interest to us to see the connection between Israel in birth pangs during the years of the Great Tribulation and the proclamation of the gospel of the Kingdom as we see here in - Mt 24:8 *"All these are the beginning of sorrows [the pain associated with giving birth]. 9 "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. 10 "And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. 11 "Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. 12 "And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. 13 "But he who endures to the end shall be saved. 14 "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.*

a). V8 talks about 'the beginning of sorrows' which takes us to that which begins with the opening of the second seal on the 7 sealed scroll - v9-12 then give some detail of what will happen to the Jews during this birthing process with v13 then giving the promise of the outcome for those who endure 'to the end'. And within the context of Israel's birthing process 'the gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations', v14 - And with the completion of the preaching of this gospel the end of the Tribulation and ultimately the end of Man's Day will come.

b). The exact same thing is also seen in Mark's account, recorded in - Mr 13:8 *"For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines and troubles. These are the beginnings of sorrows. 9 "But watch out for yourselves, for they will deliver you up to councils, and you will be beaten in the synagogues. You will be brought before rulers and kings for My sake, for a testimony to them. 10 "And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations.*

c). So then, we can see that while Israel is going through the intense pain of judgment for the purpose of bringing forth life, the gospel of the Kingdom is being preached at the same time 'as a witness to all nations'. In other words, during the Great Tribulation, the final 3 ½ years of the Tribulation, the gospel of the Kingdom will be preached to all the Gentile nations by the 144000.

d). And this of course is exactly what we have seen in previous weeks from the Book of the Revelation – following the 144000 having been caught up to God and His throne we will remember reading this from –

Re 14:1 ¶ Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads. 2 And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. 3 They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. 4 These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. 5 And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God. 6 ¶ Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth--to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people-- 7 saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water." 8 And another angel followed, saying, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." 9 Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10 "he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

e). In verses 1-5 we see the 144000 present in the throne room of God and we are given details about their faithfulness and we are told that they have been ‘redeemed from among men’ and are ‘firstfruits to God and to the Lamb’.

f). Then in v6, immediately following the presentation of the 144000, we see ‘another angel’ who has ‘the everlasting gospel’, the gospel of the Kingdom, which is to be preached ‘to those who dwell on the earth – to every nation, tribe, tongue and people’.

g). Now, the preaching of the gospel is not something that has ever been placed in the hands of angels, but only in the hands of men and within our context here specifically placed in the hands of the Jews with a view to taking this gospel to the Gentile nations.

h). And that which the angel then says in v7 is not the gospel message, but a warning concerning impending judgment along with a call to give proper reverence and honor to the God of the Universe.

i). V8, 9 and 10 then give detail about the judgment warned about by the angel in v7 which is then to take place with respect to Israel and the nations during the Great Tribulation – these events once again are the same ‘sorrows’, birth pangs, that we saw in Matthew Chapter 24 and Mark Chapter 13, to be accompanied by the preaching of the gospel of the Kingdom, which is the same ‘everlasting gospel’ from Revelation Chapter 14.

j). And as we know, those who are to preach ‘this gospel of the Kingdom’ to ‘every nation, tribe, tongue and people’ are those seen in the Throne Room of God when this gospel is brought into view – the 144000 Jewish evangelists.

k). Such is the way that the scriptures tie all of this together for us, providing their own commentary on themselves and giving their own interpretation.

4). So, what do we find in the scriptures about the outcome of the ministry of the 144000 to the Gentile nations during the 3 ½ years of the Great Tribulation?

a). *Re 6:9 ¶ When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. 10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" 11 Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.*

b). To begin to answer our question we can go to the opening of the 5th seal on the 7 sealed scroll where we find souls under the altar. Now as we begin to put this together let’s remember from our previous studies that the detail given through the opening of this 5th seal provides us with additional commentary on that which has taken place through the opening of the first 4 seals.

c). And so, by way of review let’s firstly remember that the opening of each of the first 4 seals on the 7 sealed scroll should be seen as progressive and concurrent with the events described in each being the result of that which has gone before, through the opening of the previous seal.

d). And as it would be correct for us to see these first 4 seals as a complete, inseparable overview of the whole 7 years of the Tribulation, it is

necessary that we begin with the first seal - Re 6:1 ¶ *Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, "Come and see." 2 And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.*

And it all begins of course with Antichrist as the counterfeit to the Prince of Peace setting out to take the kingdom by intrigue.

c). Re 6:3 ¶ *When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, "Come and see." 4 Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword.*

Having gained the kingdom by intrigue the Antichrist reveals his true nature, seeking now to annihilate the Jewish people from the face of the earth. War and devastation follow in the wake of his attempted Jewish genocide as the law of sowing and reaping comes into effect - Ho 8:7 *"They sow the wind, And reap the whirlwind.*

d). Re 6:5 *When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come and see." So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. 6 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine."*

The war and devastation that follows the persecution of the Jews gives rise to a world-wide famine the likes of which have not been seen before – it seems that the inhabitants of the earth are plunged into a desperate struggle for their very survival.

e). Re 6:7 *When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, "Come and see." 8 So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.*

As a result of the progressively deteriorating conditions on the earth pictured through the opening of the previous 3 seals we now find Antichrist characterized as 'Death' itself with the picture given of Hades, the place of the dead, closely following at his heels. By the end of the Tribulation, because of Antichrist's actions, ¼ of the earth's population, a number probably over 1 billion, will be dead through conflict, persecution, famine, sickness, disease, pestilence and even the ravages of wild animals.

f). And again, to go back to Matthew Chapter 24 and Mark Chapter 13, the progressively deteriorating events described through the opening of seals 2-4 are the birth pangs that give rise to the birth of the redeemed nation of Israel at the end of the Great Tribulation.

g). That seen through the opening of the first 4 seals then is the context into which the ministry of the 144000 is to be placed – as conditions on the earth become more and more desperate so the gospel of the Kingdom is preached to every nation, tribe, tongue and people with very large numbers receiving the message and many being martyred for that which they have come to believe – all of which is exactly what we see through the opening of the fifth seal - *those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.*

h). And that these are seen as souls ‘under the altar’, is an allusion to the brazen altar in the outer court at the door of the Tabernacle, under which the blood of the animals sacrificed at the brazen altar was poured - *Le 4:7 'And the priest shall put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the LORD, which is in the tabernacle of meeting; and he shall pour the remaining blood of the bull at the base of the altar of the burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.*

Remembering that the life/soul is in the blood.

i). These who we see then through the opening of the 5th seal are those who are the literal fulfillment of that seen in – *Ro 12:1 ¶ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice,*

5). We will though have to continue with this next time – if the Lord is willing.