

Sunday October 26th 2014
From Here To Eternity
Part Six

1). 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.*

a). As we know the rider on the white horse is the Antichrist and we had seen last week that his appearance on the world stage is inextricably connected to God again dealing with the nation of Israel during the final 7 years of the dispensation allotted to them - 2Th 2:6 *And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time.*

b). The revealing of the Antichrist 'in his own time' then can only come at the time that God has appointed for this to happen and this time cannot come until after the 'Church' has been resurrected/raptured as God never deals with different groups of household servants at the same time and the revealing of Antichrist is clearly seen to happen after the events at Christ's Judgment Seat as set out in the sequencing in the Book of Revelation.

c). And so, following the revealing of the Bride at Christ's Judgment Seat our Lord begins the process of the redemption of the inheritance, which we also know to be the time of Jacob's trouble, the Tribulation, by taking the 7 sealed scroll from the right hand of God the Father and then opening the first seal - and it is at this point, with the opening of this seal, when there are no longer any Christians upon the earth and God's attention is turned to Israel once again that the Antichrist appears and makes a covenant with the many in Israel marking the beginning of the Tribulation.

d). Then as we look at the description of the rider in Revelation Chapter 6 we find him on a 'white horse', an image symbolizing peace just as we see in Da 11:21 ¶ *"And in his place shall arise a vile person, to whom they will not give the honor of royalty; but he shall come in peaceably, and seize the kingdom by intrigue.*

And as we see from v21 from Daniel 11, the man who comes in peaceably is really a 'vile person' who is not given the honor of royalty and although he

comes into prominence 'peaceably' his intent is 'to seize the kingdom' and he is going to do this 'by intrigue'.

e). If we continue in the description of him in Revelation we see that he has a bow, but there are no arrows to go with the bow, again symbolizing his supposed peaceable nature, but it is a detail that may also signify his ultimate intent.

f). He has a crown given to him, which at this point is described by the Greek word 'stephanos' denoting a crown worn by someone who is not yet in a position of rulership – however, rulership of a worldwide kingdom is his aim, hence we see him going out 'conquering and to conquer' – but as we have seen this is not by force of arms but by intrigue, by cunning and deception, exactly as we have seen in the type with Haman in the Book of Esther –

Es 3:8 Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, "There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of your kingdom; their laws are different from all other people's, and they do not keep the king's laws. Therefore it is not fitting for the king to let them remain. 9 "If it pleases the king, let a decree be written that they be destroyed, and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver into the hands of those who do the work, to bring it into the king's treasuries." 10 So the king took his signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews. 11 And the king said to Haman, "The money and the people are given to you, to do with them as seems good to you."

g). The Antichrist is then the counterfeit of the Prince of Peace – the peace he brings being founded in deception, masking his real intent.

h). In this respect we can see the parallel between the Antichrist, the last king of Babylon and Nimrod, the first king of Babylon - *Ge 10:8 Cush begot Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one on the earth. 9 He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD."*

And as we will remember from a previous study Nimrod's exploits as 'a mighty hunter' have nothing to do with the pursuit of wildlife, but everything to do with the conquest and subjugation of the people within his reach and we must assume that he does this in much the same way as the one whom he pictures.

2). In his counterfeit role as the 'Prince of Peace' the Antichrist also counterfeits the building of the Millennial Temple in Jerusalem, the authentic

building of which is reserved for the true Prince of Peace at the beginning of His Millennial Reign.

a). The building of the temple by Antichrist and the re-establishment of the Levitical priesthood with its sacrificial system would obviously be an outcome of the covenant he has made with many in Israel – but again this is a re-introduction of temple worship founded upon a lie, allowing the re-introduction of a sacrificial system that passed out of existence with the first coming of Christ.

b). And no doubt the re-introduction of temple worship in Jerusalem would draw many Jews back to the land of Israel, concentrating them in one place so as to make the plan that Antichrist has for them easier to accomplish.

c). If we consider the state of affairs in the Middle East at present it would not be difficult to imagine why that which the Antichrist offers would be so attractive to a beleaguered Jewish nation.

d). However, we can also see the seriousness of this with regards to Israel's continued unbelief as we remember that Israel is God's covenant nation – It is Israel alone which is the recipient of a covenant relationship with the God of their fathers and He is the only one with whom covenant must be made.

e). In entering into covenant with Antichrist the Jewish people, even if done in ignorance, align themselves with the kingdom of Satan, the one who seeks to destroy them, the one who's intent is to put an end to God's plans and purposes and destroy His redemptive work in the earth. No doubt we can hear the echo here from the declaration made on the day of the Lord's crucifixion in the streets of Jerusalem some 2000 years prior to this – Joh 19:15 *But they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar!"*

f). The making of the covenant with Antichrist is an even more climactic event than that seen here in John.

g). And so we find then that Israel's bankrupt spiritual condition on the day that God's clock stopped, at the end of the 483 years from Daniel Chapter 9, is the same bankrupt spiritual condition found on the day that God's clock starts again to fulfill the last 7 years carried over from the previous dispensation.

h). It is as if the intervening 2000 years did not exist and it is easy for us to see why God holds each individual Jew alive at the beginning of the Tribulation accountable for the death of His Son as if they were actually there

on the day their fathers crucified Him – As in effect through embracing this satanic covenant they put their King to death again.

3). Da 9:27 *Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week;*
We will note that the covenant is made 'with many', a phrase that denotes a large number, probably the majority, but as always in Israel's history there has been a remnant who see wickedness for what it is – and as always in Israel's history God sends them prophets to warn them and call them to repentance before He brings calamity upon the unrepentant nation –
Jer 7:25 *"Since the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt until this day, I have even sent to you all My servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them. 26 "Yet they did not obey Me or incline their ear, but stiffened their neck. They did worse than their fathers. 27 "Therefore you shall speak all these words to them, but they will not obey you. You shall also call to them, but they will not answer you. 28 "So you shall say to them, 'This is a nation that does not obey the voice of the LORD their God nor receive correction. Truth has perished and has been cut off from their mouth.*

a). And so, as God begins to deal with unrepentant, unbelieving, spiritually bankrupt Israel once again, a nation that has entered into a covenant with the embodiment of evil itself, the seed of the serpent, so He sends Prophets to the nation to call them to repentance - Mal 4:5 *Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. 6 And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse."*

And as we know from that recorded in the Revelation these prophets begin their ministry on the day the covenant is made - Re 11:3 ¶ *"And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth." 4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth. 5 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. 6 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 all plagues, as often as they desire.*

b). We will no doubt remember from our study of the Book of Malachi that - V4 from Revelation Chapter 11 takes us to the 5th vision seen in the Book of Zechariah – Zec 4:1 ¶ *Now the angel who talked with me came back*

and wakened me, as a man who is wakened out of his sleep. 2 And he said to me, "What do you see?" So I said, "I am looking, and there is a lampstand of solid gold with a bowl on top of it, and on the stand seven lamps with seven pipes to the seven lamps. 3 "Two olive trees are by it, one at the right of the bowl and the other at its left."13 Then he answered me and said, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my lord." 14 So he said, "These are the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth."

And all of Zechariah's visions all have to do prophetically with Israel with respect to Christ's coming Kingdom.

c). And so, to see 'the two anointed ones' standing 'beside the Lord of the whole earth' would inevitably bring to mind the scene in Matthew Chapter 17 with Moses and Elijah standing beside the Lord as He comes in His Kingdom on the mount of transfiguration - Mt 17:1 ¶ *Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; 2 and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. 3 And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.*

d). We also see these 2 witnesses, who are prophets, being given supernatural powers to perform miraculous signs - *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 all plagues, as often as they desire.*

e). And within the OT we will remember there are only 2 individuals who were given power to perform supernatural signs, one was Moses along with his successor Joshua and the other was Elijah along with his successor Elisha.

f). With regards to both these individuals their empowerment to perform supernatural signs was inseparably connected to Israel and the theocracy, Israel and the Kingdom.

g). With Moses the supernatural signs appeared in connection with Israel leaving Egypt in order to realize an inheritance in the Theocracy in another land, the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – And in this we have the establishment of a first-mention principle with regards to signs, wonders and miracles which can never change. In other words supernatural signs demonstrated by those empowered to perform them can only have to do with the Jewish people, with the Theocracy, with the Kingdom in view – 1Co 1:22a *For Jews request a sign.....*

h). Consequently, with respect to Elijah and Elisha, the manifestation of supernatural signs could only have to do with the Jewish people with the theocracy in view – which is exactly what we see in the scriptures.

i). Elijah's ministry takes place during one of the darkest times of Jewish history when Ahab and his wife Jezebel, the daughter of a pagan king, had led Israel completely away from God, into Baal worship. The Theocracy was still in existence at this time, but within a divided kingdom. And the supernatural signs performed had to do with Israel and the Kingdom – they had to do with a call for the people to return to the God of their fathers – And we can see the obvious parallels here with the circumstances that will exist in the days of Antichrist.

j). And so, within the OT context we can see that Moses and Elijah were the ones who were empowered to perform supernatural signs – now with regards to Moses and supernatural signs let's remember this recorded in Exodus – Ex 7:20 *And Moses and Aaron did so, just as the LORD commanded. So he lifted up the rod and struck the waters that were in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants. And all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood.*

k). And with regards to Elijah let's remember this from – 1Ki 17:1 ¶ *And Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except at my word."*

Jas 5:17 *Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months.*

l). And once again let's remember what we just read a short time ago concerning the supernatural powers given to the 2 witnesses - *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 all plagues, as often as they desire.*

m). Consequently we will remember that by comparing scripture with scripture in this way, as we saw in our study of Malachi, we cannot help but conclude that the 2 witnesses, the prophets who are sent to Israel, are Moses and Elijah – who together represent the totality of the OT scriptures, the Law and the prophets – all of which speak of Christ and His coming Kingdom.

4). Despite the manifestation of supernatural signs and the call to repentance however, the situation in Israel during the first 3 ½ years of the Tribulation

will remain just as described in Jeremiah Chapter 7 – unbelief and a refusal to hear.

a). In many respects this parallels the situation that we find at Christ's first advent when the religious leaders of the nation sought to maintain their position and influence rather than embrace the truth – it would be easy to imagine the religious leaders of Israel in this future day wanting to maintain that which will have only recently become theirs – position, influence and authority along with a temple in Jerusalem for which they have been waiting for 2000 years.

b). This will though be a period of time which will be very uncomfortable for both Israel and the Gentile nations as they continue to be the recipients of the manifestation of the supernatural signs performed by the witnesses and are powerless, because of the witnesses supernatural protection, to do anything about it.

c). However, the clarity of that experienced in the streets of Jerusalem through the supernatural power given to the 2 witnesses is made somewhat murky by the actions of the arch-deceiver – just as in Moses' day Pharaoh's magicians replicated the signs shown by Moses and Aaron as we see recorded in - *Ex 7:10 So Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh, and they did so, just as the LORD commanded. And Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and before his servants, and it became a serpent. 11 But Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers; so the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments.*

d). As it was in Egypt with the Assyrian Pharaoh so it will be in the days of Antichrist when we will see him and his false prophet doing exactly the same thing– *2Th 2:9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,*
Re 19:20.....the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image.

5). As has always been the case in Israel, although the greater majority of the nation rejected that spoken by the prophets there were those who had ears to hear and such is exactly what we find with respect to the prophetic ministry of the 2 witnesses in this future time - It is as a direct result of their ministry during this time that we see the conversion of 144000 Jews, 12000 from each of the 12 tribes, a progressive event which is represented in figurative language in – *Re 7:1 ¶ After these things I saw four angels standing at the four*

corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. 2 Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, 3 saying, "Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads." 4 And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed:

a). An event which is further described through figurative language in Re 12:1 ¶ *Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. 2 Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth. 3 And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. 4 His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. 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.*

6). As we had seen earlier from Revelation Chapter 11 the 2 witnesses ministry is given a specific timeframe of 'one thousand two hundred and sixty days' – 3 ½ years – which takes us to the half-way mark in the final 7 years of Daniel's 70th week.

a). Now we will remember that with the opening of the first seal on the 7 sealed scroll we saw Antichrist going out 'conquering and to conquer' and we had seen in Daniel Chapter 11 that he would 'seize the kingdom by intrigue' – so we will realize that during the time of the ministry of the 2 witnesses he has not been idle, but has through his cunning and deception been engineering his way towards being the world wide ruler that he will have always intended.

b). And into this picture we must also remember to add that the Antichrist is the literal seed of Satan, the one spoken of by God in the Garden following Adam's fall - Ge 3:15 *And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."*

And so there are events taking place in the heavens as well as the events taking place on the earth at this time.

c). And in Revelation Chapter 13 we are given a figurative picture of what is to take place during this first 3 ½ years of the Tribulation which provides us with additional detail to add to that which we see taking place in Jerusalem during this time - Re 13:1 ¶ *Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. 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. 3 And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. 4 So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" 5 And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. 6 Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. 7 It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.*

b). And as we read these verses we will no doubt be reminded of the verses recorded in Daniel Chapter 7 that prophetically record these same events - Da 7:1 ¶ *In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head while on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream, telling the main facts. 2 Daniel spoke, saying, "I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea. 3 "And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other. 4 "The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it. 5 "And suddenly another beast, a second, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And they said thus to it: 'Arise, devour much flesh!' 6 "After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it. 7 "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. 8 "I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the*

first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words.

c). The similarities that we see here in these two sets of scripture are unmistakably striking and it will be useful for us to look at these in some detail.

d). But this will have to wait until next time though – if the Lord is willing.