

Sunday November 30th 2014
From Here To Eternity
Part Nine

1). Ge 3:1 ¶ *Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'" 2 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; 3 "but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'" 4 Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. 5 "For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."*

a). From our first encounter with Satan in the Garden we have seen that deception is the mode in which he operates. He has always asked the question, 'Has God indeed said?' which has resulted in so many manipulating the Word of God to suit their own end as we will remember here with regards to false teachers in - *2Pe 2:2 And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. 3 ¶ By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words;*

b). And we know that this situation has arisen as a result of the tares sown amongst the wheat causing the 'Church' to grow in a completely unnatural way, allowing the birds of the air to find a home therein, resulting in the word of truth becoming completely corrupted - *1Ti 4:1 ¶ Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,*

c). Satan's purpose has always been to deceive those who could know the truth and produce fruit for the Kingdom so that they would believe the lie instead and remain fruitless - *Joh 8:44 "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.*

d). And although it would be true to say - *2Co 2:11b..... for we are not ignorant of his devices.*

Our lack of ignorance does not guarantee our immunity – We remain vulnerable to deception unless we are continually clothed with the whole

armor of God as we admonished to do in – Eph 6:11 *Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*

Paying most particular attention to - Eph 6:16 *above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.*

e). And again as we consider this we are drawn to the realization of just how important our proper engagement with the scriptures is and how essential it is for us to put into practice that which we see in - 2Ti 2:15 *Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

Let us never take for granted that which we have or become complacent about our pursuit of His Kingdom as we study the scriptures.

2). And that which we have seen in the beginning with Satan's deceptive ways is exactly that which we see in the end – In our last time of study we had discovered the extent of the counterfeit produced by Satan through his Antichrist and the false prophet for the purpose of deceiving Israel and the whole world as seen throughout the OT and in the Book of the Revelation. But even this final deceptive phase our Lord had warned about as we see recorded in – Mt 24:21 *"For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 "And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened. 23 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it. 24 "For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. 25 "See, I have told you beforehand.*

a). The scriptures record - 2Co 11:14 *And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.*

And it is as 'an angel of light', as the 'man of peace' that we first see the Antichrist in the counterfeit of the 'Prince of Peace' - Re 6:2 *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.*

b). And it is within the parameters of this counterfeit that the man of sin makes a covenant with many in Israel – a counterfeit of the covenant prophesied in – Eze 37:26 *"Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; I will establish them and multiply them, and I will set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore.*

c). There are several things we would want to note here as we look at this verse – God in that future Day will make a 'covenant of peace' with Israel

with a view to the Millennial Kingdom and at the beginning of the Tribulation Antichrist makes a covenant of peace with Israel, which is the counterfeit of that promised in Ezekiel with a view to the establishment of his own kingdom. And according to Ezekiel, following the establishment of the new covenant, the covenant of peace, in that future Day, God will, 'set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore' – and it is 7 months and 10 days following the making of the counterfeit covenant with Antichrist that temple worship within the Mosaic economy begins in the newly constructed temple in Jerusalem providing yet another counterfeit to the outworking of God's purpose.

d). And it is here in Israel's acceptance of Antichrist and the counterfeits he brings that we find the fulfillment of that which was spoken by the Lord in - *Joh 5:43 "I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive."*

e). And in conjunction with this we will remember the other counterfeits we had seen last time, beginning with the counterfeiting of – *Mt 11:27 "All things have been delivered to Me by My Father,"* Where Satan gives his power and throne and great authority to his son just before the mid-point in the Tribulation.

f). And the counterfeit of the work of the Holy Spirit through the signs performed by the false prophet, accomplished through the power of Satan, which he will have given to his son - *Re 13:13 He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.*

g). These now bring us to the ultimate counterfeit, that of counterfeiting the Trinity, with Satan as the counterfeit to God the Father, the Antichrist as the counterfeit to God the Son and the work of the false prophet as the counterfeit to the work of the Holy Spirit.

h). And there is a dreadful irony here as we remember what was recorded in the gospel accounts concerning the work of the Holy Spirit by the Pharisees - *Mt 12:24 Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, "This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons."*

i). Here in Matthew Chapter 12 the power of the Holy Spirit is attributed to the power of Satan and in the events seen around the middle of the Tribulation the power of Satan will be attributed to that of the Holy Spirit.

j). Even the false prophet himself, on the one hand, can be seen as a counterfeit to the One spoken of by the Lord in - *De 18:18 'I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.'*

And on the other hand, as a counterfeit to the prophet Elijah who called down fire from heaven in the days of Ahab and whose return has been promised, as we will remember from –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."*

k). And finally, in the death and raising of the beast from the bottomless pit we have the counterfeit to the death and resurrection of our Lord.

3). 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.*

a). That which we see here at the beginning of Chapter 13 takes us to a point very close to the middle of the Tribulation. The image we now see of the beast 'rising up out of the sea' not only shows his inextricable connection to the 3 previous phases of the worldwide Babylonian kingdom, but also shows the reemergence of that kingdom, now in its final phase; the 7 heads with 10 horns and 10 crowns pictures for us Antichrist with his 10 nation confederacy now in the place of world domination.

b). We know that the dragon gives his son his power and throne and great authority once he has been cast out of heaven and so we must conclude that the war in heaven which results in Satan's expulsion and casting down to the earth must take place just prior to the half way mark.

c). We also see from v5 that the beast is given authority to continue for 42 months [3 ½ years]following his death and resurrection which means we must place Antichrist's death and subsequent raising from the dead at or extremely close to the end of the first 3 ½ years. So then his death and counterfeit resurrection will take place after Satan is cast out of heaven leading into the mid-point in the Tribulation.

d). If we continue to read in Chapter 13 we will find verses that take us directly to the Tribulation's midway point - *Re 13:6 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.*

That which we see in v6 is that which Daniel refers to as the abomination of desolation in - *Da 12:11 "And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days.*

This is the same event we have seen described in - *Da 9:27 Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; 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,*

With further commentary on this same event given in - *2Th 2:3 ¶ Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.*

With reference to this same event made by the Lord in - *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. 17 "Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. 18 "And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. 19 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 20 "And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. 21 "For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 "And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.*

With additional details and a specific focus on Jerusalem given through Luke's account - *Lu 21:20 ¶ "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. 21 "Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. 22 "For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. 23 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. 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.

e). It is at the mid-point in the Tribulation then that Antichrist breaks his covenant of peace with Israel, stops the daily sacrifices in the temple and enters the temple, something no Gentile would be allowed to do, and declares himself to be God.

f). So then it is prior to this point that Satan is cast out of heaven and gives his power, throne and great authority to his son – Antichrist is killed and resurrected, subsequently being given the authority to kill the 2 witnesses which is then followed by his breaking of the covenant of peace with Israel and his declaration that he is God.

g). He is now the worldwide ruler he had always intended to be, being the 4th and final phase of the worldwide Babylonian kingdom established to encompass both the beginning and the end of the times of the Gentiles.

h). This is when he now begins his genocidal act against God's chosen people.

4). *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 Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.*

a). Now Revelation Chapter 12, like so much of the Book of the Revelation, begins with a complete overview of the events being described and then goes back to give more detail on those events – these first 6 verses give us the complete overview and the verses that follow drop back to give us more detail and explanation of the events seen here - *Re 12:7 And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, 8 but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. 9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. 10 Then I heard a loud voice saying*

in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. 11 "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. 12 ¶ "Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! 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." 13 Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. 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. 15 So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. 16 But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. 17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

b). As we look at these verse then there are 2 threads that we are going to follow, that concerning the male child and that concerning the woman.

c). We see this concerning both in *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 Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.*

We see the birth of the male child who is caught up to God and the woman fleeing into the wilderness to the place God has prepared for her, where she will be fed 1260 days [3 ½ years] and then this in *13 Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. 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.*

We again see the woman fleeing to the wilderness, but here the event is described by the woman being given 'two wings of a great eagle' – she goes to her place where she is nourished 'for a time and times and half a time' [3 ½ years]. And this is seen to happen after Satan had been cast to the earth. And as we look at this we might recall that which the Lord told Israel in –

Ex 19:4 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself.'

d). So the woman fleeing to the wilderness happens at the time that Antichrist moves against the Jews and Jerusalem at the mid-point in the Tribulation – the events that we have just been looking at following the resurrection of the Antichrist.

e). At the end of v5 we see the male child 'caught up to God and His throne' before the woman flees to the wilderness and although this is how these 2 events are given to us, this is not the timing in which they take place.

f). Following Satan being cast out of heaven in v9 we see this in *11 "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.*

Contextually, those spoken of here can only be the 144000 as they are the only ones converted during the previous 3 ½ years.

g). And if we continue reading more detail is added for us - *17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

Note that we are dealing here with the woman's offspring, and again contextually the offspring must be the male child, the 144000 – and again these are the only ones of whom it could be said that they 'keep the commandments of God' the only ones at this point who 'have the testimony of Jesus Christ'. All of which is perfectly consistent with that which is said about them in - *Re 14:4 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.*

h). So then, given the timing that we see here, the 144000 are caught up to God and His throne immediately following the mid-point in the Tribulation and presumably very close to the time when those who flee to the wilderness make their journey as Antichrist begins his attempted genocide.

i). Putting all this together we will realize that at the mid-point in the Tribulation when Antichrist turns his hand against the Jewish people the nation of Israel will become divided into 3 distinct groups – those who comprise the 144000, those who flee to the wilderness and those who *will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations.*

5). To recap then the sequencing of the events we have been looking at – immediately prior to the mid-point in the Tribulation Satan is cast out of heaven and gives his power, throne and great authority to the Antichrist.

b). Antichrist is then killed and resurrected.

c). At the mid-point, or extremely close to it, the 2 witnesses are killed and the 144000 are sealed.

d). At the mid-point Antichrist declares himself to be God and begins his genocidal actions – the woman flees to the wilderness.

e). And then immediately following the mid-point the 144000 are caught up to God and His throne.

6). And as we will remember the 144000 are taken into heaven to remove them from Satan’s jurisdiction, also remembering that since Satan no longer has access to the heavens this is a place of safety for the 144000.

a). And as we look at this we might remember the birth of another Male Child who was born in the kingdom of Herod, who himself forms a type of the Antichrist in his attempt to destroy the Christ Child - *Mt 2:16 ¶ Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men.*

b). Then in the same way as the 144000 are taken into heaven, the Christ was removed to a place of safety, taking Him outside of Herod’s jurisdiction – *Mt 2:13 ¶ Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him."*

c). At it is following this period of protection that the Lord returns to the land He left where for the 3 ½ years of His earthly ministry He preached the Word of the Kingdom.

d). And it is following their time in a place of protection, where they are also prepared, that the 144000 return to the earth to preach the message of the Kingdom to the Gentile nations during the second half of the Tribulation.

7). That which ensues from the middle of the Tribulation onwards is described by the Lord as - *Mt 24:21 "For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.*

a). This is the time marked in Revelation by the opening of the second seal - 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.*

b). But all of this we will remember is completely within the plans and purposes of God so that His will, will be done on earth as it is in heaven – Isa 63:4 *For the day of vengeance is in My heart, And the year of My redeemed has come.*

c). Lu 21:22 *"For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.*

8). We will continue with this next time, if the Lord is willing.