

Sunday October 7th 2012
The Letter to the Hebrews
Part Sixty

1). Heb 11:29 *By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, whereas the Egyptians, attempting to do so, were drowned. 30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days. 31 By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.*

a). Now, in order to get ourselves back into thinking about our study in Hebrews let's spend a little time remembering the context in which the fulfillment of the events pictured in our verses, the overthrow of Gentile world power, take place. To start with we will remember that the final 7 years of Man's Day, Daniel's seventieth week, a period of time that we know as the Tribulation, can be divided into 2 halves.

b). The first half, marked by the actions of the rider on the white horse in Revelation Chapter 6, are 3 ½ years of illusory peace as the 'man of sin', the seed of Satan from Genesis 3:15 - the Antichrist, makes a covenant with many in Israel and in doing so becomes the most seductive in Israel's history of Gentile lovers.

c). His seductive charm and eloquence is also turned on the Gentile nations, where he is readily accepted as the ruler of the world.

d). The achievement of worldwide dominion with his power base in Babylon confirms his kingdom as the 4th part of the image that we had seen in the Book of Daniel.

e). This first 3 ½ years is also the period of time during which the 2 witnesses seen in Revelation 11 pursue their ministry in Jerusalem –
Re 11:1 ¶ *Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. 2 "But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months. 3 ¶ "And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth."*

e). However, this outward appearance of peace is in reality a time for preparation and consolidation waiting the time when Antichrist's true intent is revealed at the mid-point of the Tribulation.

f). An intent that had already been typified in the actions of Haman recorded in the Book of Esther - Es 3:13 *And the letters were sent by couriers into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all the Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar, and to plunder their possessions.*

g). And prefigured through the actions of Herod at the Lord's first advent and the actions of the Assyrian Pharaoh in Egypt in Moses' day.

2). In conjunction with events in the heavens and on earth it is at this mid-point in the Tribulation that Satan, through his son, turns his wrath in a destructive frenzy against Israel – it is at this time that the 2 witnesses are killed and lie unburied in the streets of Jerusalem for 3 ½ days, while the world rejoices over their death, before they are raised from the dead and ascend into heaven and at this time that the covenant made with many in Israel is broken.

a). This we find recorded 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 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. 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.*

b). 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.

c). Things concerning the 'Woman' and her 'Male Child' we will come back to later – but for the moment suffice it to say that Satan gives to Antichrist his power, his throne and 'great authority' the very things he had offered Christ on the mountain top.

d). It is at this time that Antichrist's armies invade Jerusalem, he declares himself as god in the temple before he destroys it and Jerusalem, and his attempted annihilation of the Jewish people begins – just as Christ had warned - 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. 25 "And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; 26 "men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven will be shaken.

e). But as we know from our previous studies Gentile world power, the world system under Antichrist, established after the resurrection/rapture of the Church, will be overthrown and utterly destroyed, just as we see pictured in the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea and the destruction of Jericho from the first 2 verses we read this morning.

f). Ps 2:4 *He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision. 5 Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure: 6 "Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion." 7 ¶¶ "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. 8 Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession.*

g). Now if we go back to the 3rd of our opening verses this morning we will see that the harlot Rahab did not perish when Jericho was overthrown – and according to the verse this is because she had faith and this faith resulted in her receiving the 2 Jewish spies ‘with peace’ – let’s look at the verse one more time - *By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.*

3). On 2 occasions following the Exodus from Egypt, but prior to entering the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, spies are sent into the land.

a). A year and a half after leaving Egypt Moses sends 12 spies into the land while the nation is camped at Kadesh Barnea – and we will remember that because of the bad report given by 10 of the spies the nation is turned to unbelief and the whole of that generation except Caleb and Joshua perish in the wilderness.

b). The second generation under the leadership of Joshua came back to the borders of the land 38 ½ years after this [40 years from the Exodus] and this time 2 spies only are sent into the land who bring back a good report, based on that which God had previously told them - Jos 1:1 ¶ *After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, it came to pass that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying: 2 "Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them-the children of Israel.*

c). Jos 2:1 ¶ *Now Joshua the son of Nun sent out two men from Acacia Grove to spy secretly, saying, "Go, view the land, especially Jericho." So they went, and came to the house of a harlot named Rahab, and lodged there.*

d). Jos 2:23 *So the two men returned, descended from the mountain, and crossed over; and they came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him all that had befallen them. 24 And they said to Joshua, "Truly the LORD has delivered all the land into our hands, for indeed all the inhabitants of the country are fainthearted because of us."*

e). We will no doubt immediately see the contrast between the report of the 2 spies on this second occasion and the report of the 10 at Kadesh Barnea.

f). The destruction of Jericho then is absolutely certain – the walls of the city must fall and the inhabitants will be slain. This is what God had said and this is what must come to pass – the presence of the spies in the city of Jericho only serves to prove the inevitability of the events that would take place there.

g). And it is within this context that we find the 2 spies in the house of Rahab the harlot.

h). Rahab is a Gentile and as such her condition is aptly described in - Eph 2:12.....*being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.*

i). As a Gentile within the kingdom of the king of Jericho her fate was to be that of all the others in the city. But let's note what she says to the 2 spies who lodge in her house.

4). Jos 2:8 ¶ *Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof, 9 and said to the men: "I know that the LORD has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you. 10 "For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. 11 "And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts melted; neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you, for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.*

a). Rahab had believed that which God had already done and therefore believes that which God is about to do and believes that which is portended by the presence of the spies – in other words she has faith. And that faith caused her to act in a certain way - Jas 2:25 *Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way?*

b). Jos 2:2 *And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, "Behold, men have come here tonight from the children of Israel to search out the country." 3 So the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying, "Bring out the men who have come to you, who have entered your house, for they have come to search out all the country." 4 Then the woman took the two men and hid them. So she said, "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from. 5 "And it happened as the gate was being shut, when it was dark, that the men went out. Where the men went I do not know; pursue them quickly, for you may overtake them."*

c). The king of Jericho would kill the spies and Rahab is clearly implicated by having received them – and so it is at considerable risk to herself and her family for that matter, that she hides the spies and sends the king looking in the wrong direction.

d). It is her faith that produces this action that is commended here in Hebrews 11, and it is the outcome of her actions that guaranteed her deliverance when the city falls and the inhabitants are killed –

Jos 2:12 *"Now therefore, I beg you, swear to me by the LORD, since I have shown you kindness, that you also will show kindness to my father's house, and give me*

a true token, 13 "and spare my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death." 14 So the men answered her, "Our lives for yours, if none of you tell this business of ours. And it shall be, when the LORD has given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with you." 15 Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was on the city wall; she dwelt on the wall.

e). Jos 6:21 And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword. 22 But Joshua had said to the two men who had spied out the country, "Go into the harlot's house, and from there bring out the woman and all that she has, as you swore to her." 23 And the young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab, her father, her mother, her brothers, and all that she had. So they brought out all her relatives and left them outside the camp of Israel. 24 But they burned the city and all that was in it with fire.

5). What we see here with regards to Rahab provides us with a picture of what will take place with respect to a considerable number of eternally saved Gentiles during the last 3 ½ years of the Tribulation, years that lead into the total destruction of Gentile world power. And after a similar fashion to that which we have seen with Ruth, Rahab represents those saved Gentiles for whom there is a positive outcome with regards to Christ's Millennial Kingdom. Needless to say there are those Gentiles saved during the Tribulation whose outcome with regards to Christ's Kingdom will be far from positive.

a). The events that begin to rapidly unwind at the mid-point in the Tribulation only serve to bring into sharper focus all that God has already said about the overthrow of Gentile world power – these events demonstrate in graphic terms the inevitability of what is to come.

b). We have already seen from Luke Chapter 21 the warning that the Lord gives to those in Israel at this time – that they should literally run for their lives. There will then be a portion of the nation of Israel who will heed this warning and escape to a place that God has prepared for their safety in the mountains, apparently in Moab - Isa 16:4 *Let My outcasts dwell with you, O Moab; Be a shelter to them from the face of the spoiler.*

c). A much greater portion of the nation who do not flee to the mountains will be killed, sold as slaves or just cast out into the Gentile nations to endure unparalleled persecution for this final 3 ½ year period.

d). But there is another portion of the nation – the 'male child' that we saw earlier in Revelation Chapter 12, who are 'caught up to God and to His throne'.

e). This 'male child' is also described as the 'first fruit' of the nation and comprises 144000 individuals – 12000 from each of the tribes of Israel – who may possibly have been saved under the ministry of the 2 witnesses during the first 3 ½ years of the Tribulation, who will be sent back to the earth to proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom amongst the Gentile nations during the last 3 ½ years.

f). *Re 7:2 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:*

g). *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—*

h). The angel seen here with the 'everlasting gospel' which is to be preached to those who dwell on the earth, is not the one who is to preach this gospel, but he has the gospel that is then committed to the 144000, possibly after a similar fashion to Paul's experience in Arabia with Christ Himself being the Teacher.

i). It is the 144000 then who are pictured by the 2 spies in the city of Jericho, and it is Rahab, the one who received their message, who pictures 'every nation, tribe, tongue and people -'

6). It is the preaching of the 'everlasting gospel' that the Lord draws attention to as a sign of the end of this age in answer to His disciples' question, as we see recorded in –*Mt 24:3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the*

sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" 4 ¶ And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. 5 "For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. 6 "And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. 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.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). Now within the picture given in the events surrounding Rahab we will remember that the king of Jericho was in pursuit of the spies with the intention of killing them – and that seen in the antitype of this picture is exactly the same.

b). We had already seen that *the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her child as soon as it was born*; resulting in the child, the 144000, being taken into heaven as we saw in Revelation Chapter 14.

c). Upon their return to the earth to preach the 'gospel of the Kingdom' there is no place of safety, no food, no drink other than that which will be given to them by saved Gentiles following the picture presented by Rahab.

d). This is a time when - Re 13:17..... *no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.*

e). A time when, with regards to the Jewish people - Zec 13:8 *And it shall come to pass in all the land," Says the LORD, "That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, But one -third shall be left in it:*

Possibly 9 – 10 million.

f). A time when over 50% of the remainder of the earth's population will die.

g). This is a time then when Antichrist will do everything in his power to destroy the 144000, to destroy those who receive and accept their message and those who seek to protect not only the 144000, but anyone from the Jewish nation.

h). This is how one portion of saved Gentiles who have accepted the message of the gospel of the Kingdom and offered protection to the Jewish

evangelists are described - 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.*

i). And how many here are we talking about? - Re 7:9 *After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands,.....*
13 ¶ *Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?" 14 And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

j). Amazingly though, despite this 'great multitude which no one could number' being martyred, at the end of the Great Tribulation, after the destruction of Gentile world power, there will still be eternally saved Gentiles alive on the earth who will have acted by faith, as Rahab did, and there will be saved Gentiles still alive who did not act by faith as Rahab did.

k). And both these groups who are still alive will appear before the Lord in judgment with regards to an inheritance in His Kingdom –
Mt 25:31 ¶ *"When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. 32 "All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. 33 "And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 "Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:*

7). However, the details of this judgment will have to wait until next time – if the Lord is willing.