

## The Tribulation – Part 2

Last time we discussed the tribulation, and not just simply the tribulation that comes into our lives daily as we live this life and we see other people going through difficult times, but we started a study about the tribulation itself. That is known as Jacob's trouble. Of course, the Bible distinguishes between Jacob's trouble and tribulation that will take place. There's a seven-year period. In the first part of that seven years, there's going to seemingly be peace. And we know the Antichrist will come and we're going to look at that as we go through this study, but we've seen up to this point that, once again, Jacob's trouble is the last three and a half years of the tribulation. We call that the great tribulation.

But there were some things that had to take place before the tribulation starts, and we've seen that, before the tribulation, the death of Christ must have taken place, and that happened. We've seen how that Christ went to the lower parts of the Earth. Remember, He was crucified, buried; He went to the lower parts of the Earth, according to Ephesians 4:8-10, and we've also looked at how Christ rose bodily from the grave, and so will we when it's time for this old body to give up the breath of life. We go into that ground and this old body is going in, but our soul is going to go with the Lord, and then, the Bible says, the rapture and that's when Jesus comes back for us in the clouds and He says, "Come up hither." That's when we'll receive a new body. We're going to be fashioned like our Lord's body. In I John 3:2 it talks about that.

Well, we also need to understand that, before the tribulation can take place, the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost had to take place. I believe that on the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came it marked the

sanctioning by God of the church, which is the body of Christ. Acts 1:8, the first part of that verse, says: *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.*

And then in Acts 2:1-4: *<sup>1</sup>And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. <sup>2</sup>And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup>And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. <sup>4</sup>And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

Now, there will never be another Pentecost. People pray, "Oh, Lord, send Pentecost." Well, they need to be praying that people get things right with God and they need to be praying that people get saved. And, of course, that happened on the Day of Pentecost. People got saved. People got things right with God. But there'll never be another Pentecost. It was a one-time deal when the Holy Spirit was sent by God to do certain things on this Earth to help the believer, to speak to people's hearts and let them know that they need to be saved, and that when they got saved they were sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise.

The Holy Spirit had to come and then I see as the Holy Spirit came we're seeing the present church age. This also had to take place, and Jesus Christ is building His church today. He's calling out a people for His name. In Matthew 16:18, it says: *And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

Peter was not that Rock. Peter was not strong enough for Christ to build His church upon him. Jesus was speaking of Himself. He's the Rock. He's the Stone. He's the one who went through the wilderness, and He's the one who was there when He told Moses, "You just need to speak to the rock." That was after the first time when water came forth. The next time He said, "Speak to the rock and water will come forth," that living water that kept the people alive, and He is that Living Water today, and He is the Rock; He is the Stone.

In Acts 14:15, it says: *Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.* The church in other words.

Colossians 3:11: *Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.* Christ is the Rock. He's the one who's building His church.

And Galatians 3:28: *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*

It makes no difference who you are. Jesus saves the same way. I don't care what color you are, how old you are, how young you are, where you come from, what nationality you are. Jesus is building His church and He's building it with people just like you who call upon His name and receive Him as Savior.

Well, the church had to be started and then we see the time when the Lord Jesus will come down from Heaven and the church will be caught up. Now, what we've look at so far has been in the past, but now we look to the future.

"Caught up," this means rapture. No, the word "rapture" is not in the Bible. It simply means

caught up. We're going to be caught up with Him in the clouds to be with Him, and that's what the word "rapture" means. This event marks the end of the church age.

And I Thessalonians 4:13-18: <sup>13</sup>*But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren...* You know, I find that the fastest growing church today, the denomination, is the church of the ignorant brethren. We simply need to get into the Word of God and study the Bible and so, therefore, not to be ignorant of what God has for us, but study the Word of God and let God speak to our hearts. And I'm speaking to saved people. Get into the Word of God. I use the King James Bible. I still believe it is the Word of God. It hasn't changed, neither does God change. I'm sticking with the King James Bible, and that's where I'm going to be until the Lord takes me home.

Well, the Bible says there, once again in I Thessalonians 4:13, *But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.* <sup>14</sup>*For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.* That simply means these people are resting. It doesn't mean that they don't know what's going on. They're resting.

<sup>15</sup>*For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep...* resting in the Lord... <sup>16</sup>*For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: <sup>17</sup>Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*

And why should we teach this? Why should we let people know that Jesus is coming for His church in the rapture of the church? Caught up, why should we do this? Verse 4:18 tells us why. It says: *18Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*

I don't know about you, but that brings comfort to my heart knowing that Jesus is coming for me. There are certain things in this life that we get excited about, but we need to be really excited as Christians because Jesus is coming for us. He's not going to leave us here forever and especially during the tribulation period.

These things had to take place, and then the rapture must take place before the tribulation starts, and then we see that there's going to be peace, safety, and then what? Sudden destruction, according to I Thessalonians 5:3: *For when they shall say... The Bible says there... Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.*

There are seven years of tribulation, and it's going to begin sometime after the church has been removed. Second Thessalonians 2:7: *For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.*

There's something holding back the man who is coming, the Antichrist. There's something holding back the devil from when he's turned loose to bring on this tribulation period. And what is that? What is holding back this time of Jacob's trouble or the tribulation period? Well, I see that the Holy Spirit, through the true church, letteth. That is, He's delaying or hindering the revelation of the son of perdition, and that is the devil's man. In effect, He, the Holy Spirit, will be taken out of the way and all those He indwells and guides are caught up to meet the Lord in the air. They're going to be

gone, as well. And, of course, since He is omnipresent, that is the Holy Spirit, He's God, He will still be present and working on the Earth though not through the church. People will still get saved.

This may be a good place to briefly look at what has and is happening to the church just before and after the tribulation begins. Well, the people of the church, just before the tribulation begins, are seen in I Thessalonians 4:13-18. We've seen that. They're raptured.

And then we see that something's going to take place with the people of the church after the rapture. Individually, we see that the Judgment Seat of Christ will take place. In II Corinthians 5:10 it says: *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ...* Now, that's not speaking of every human being. That's only speaking of those people who know Jesus as Savior now. Why will we stand at the Judgment Seat? The Bible goes on to say in II Corinthians 5:10... *that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

In Romans 14:10, it says, *But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.*

And then we see that's individually, but then we also see something that takes place collectively, people together. The church becomes the bride or the wife of Christ. This is going on just after the rapture of the church. In Revelation 19:7, it says, *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.*

Notice that following the marriage of the Lamb, I believe after the tribulation, after the marriage, the Lamb and His bride will

celebrate their marriage with the grandest supper that has ever taken place. There's never been anything like this. In Revelation 19:9, it says: *And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.*

Well, we've seen that certain things had to take place and have to take place before the tribulation starts, and we saw how that the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus took place and also how that the Holy Spirit came, and then we're seeing that before the tribulation starts the church must be taken out of here. The Bible says God has not appointed us to wrath. So we're going to be gone.

So we've seen the past and we see the present, the church, and we see the future, how that the church will be taken out. Next time, we'll start where we're leaving off in the tribulation period where it says peace, safety, sudden destruction.

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