

# **The Sequence of Pre-Tribulational Events**

**The Last Days of the Church (not Israel!)**

# **REVIEW OF DANIEL'S VISIONS**

1. Babylonian Empire
2. Medo-Persian Empire
3. Hellenistic Empire

- a. United stage
- b. Four division stage

(developmental prelude to the Fourth Gentile empire, namely the five that have fallen, Rev. 17:10).

- ① Tarquin kings
- ② The Counselors
- ③ The Dictators
- ④ The Republicans
- ⑤ The Triumvirate

(alternatively, some see these five as Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, & Rome)

4. Imperialism
  - a. United stage
  - b. Two division stage (East & West)
  - c. One world govt stage
  - d. 10 kingdom stage (Ten kings)
  - e. Antichrist stage (7<sup>th</sup> ruler; 11<sup>th</sup> horn that becomes an eighth horn)
5. Messianic Kingdom—Christ's reign on the earth for 1,000 years (Rev 20:1-6).

# Last Days for Israel

- Last days refers to the time leading up to the Messiah's arrival and the establishment of His millennial kingdom on earth (Deut 4:30; Isaiah 2:2; Jeremiah 30:24; Ezek 38:8, 16; Micah 4:1).
- For the OT prophets, the last days for the church were a mystery (Eph 3:3-9).

# The “Last Days” for the Church

- *“'AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS,’ God says, ‘THAT I WILL POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT ON ALL MANKIND; AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY, AND YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS, AND YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS;” (Acts 2:17).*

- *For [Christ] was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you (1 Peter 1:20).*

- In **these last days** [God] has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world (Hebrews 1:2).
- Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour (1 John 2:18)
- they were saying to you, "**In the last time** there will be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts" (Jude 18).

- *the Spirit explicitly says that **in later times** some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron, men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth (1 Timothy 4:1–3).*

- *But realize this, that **in the last days** difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God (2 Timothy 3:1–4).*

- *Know this first of all, that **in the last days** mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation" (2 Peter 3:3–4).*

- *Let no one in any way deceive you, for [the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ] will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God (2 Thessalonians 2:3–4).*

- The “last days” commenced with the coming of Christ and the giving of the Spirit. These “last days” for the Church will end with the Rapture of the Church.
- For Israel, the “last days” begin with the onset of the Tribulation (7-year peace treaty with the Beast) and end with the inauguration of Christ’s millennial kingdom.
- Are there any events to look for that lead up to the Rapture? Yes!

# Matthew 24:1-8

- *Jesus came out from the temple and was going away when His disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to Him. And He said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which will not be torn down. As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things happen,*

- "what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" Jesus answered...,  
"See to it that no one misleads you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many. You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes. But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs."

## ■ When shall these things be?

- Temple destruction in AD 70 (not answered in Matthew but in parallel Luke 21:20-24)
- Sign of Your coming (answered in 24:29-31)
- Sign of the end of the age? Negatively answered in vv. 4-6 (false messiahs, local wars around the world); NOT THE END! Positively answered in vv. 7-8: nation rising against nation; kingdom against kingdom—accompanied by famines & earthquakes.
  - Nation against nation is conflict all over the land (Isa 19:1-4; 2 Chron. 15:1-7)
  - So when the whole world is at war, end has begun—the birth pangs have commenced.

# Sign 1: War, Famine, Earthquakes

- WWI (1914-1918) & WWII (1939-1945)
  - Famine: during the war years of 1918–1919, a pestilence killed 23 million. In 1920, the Great Chinese Famine occurred, followed by the Great Russian Famine in 1921.
  - Earthquakes: between the years 63–1896 there were only 26 recorded earthquakes. But since 1900: 1905 India—19K killed; 1906 Chile—20K; 1908 Italy—75K; 1915 Italy—30K; 1917 Indonesia—15K; 1918 China—10K; 1920 China—200K killed; 1923 Japan—143K killed.

- Subsequent and devastating earthquakes include: 1927 China—200K killed; 1932 China—70K; 1933 China—10K; 1934 India—10K; 1935 Pakistan—45K; 1939 Chile—28K; Turkey—30K; 1948 Russia—110K; 1960 Morocco—12K; 1962 Iran—12K; 1968 Iran—12K to 20K; 1970 China—10K; Peru—66K; 1974 China—20K; 1975 China—10K; 1976 Guatamala—23K; China—255K; Philippines—8K; 1978 Iran—15K; 1988 Russia-Turkish Border—25K; 1990 Iran—45:; 1999 Turkey—15,600 killed.

■ *In the first 1000 years after Jesus, there were approximately 5 recorded major earthquakes (likely many more). However, the trend has been on the increase:*

- 14<sup>th</sup> century: 157 major earthquakes
- 15<sup>th</sup> century: 174 major earthquakes
- 16<sup>th</sup> century: 253 major earthquakes
- 17<sup>th</sup> century: 278 major earthquakes
- 18<sup>th</sup> century: 640 major earthquakes
- 19<sup>th</sup> century: 2119 major earthquakes
- 20<sup>th</sup> century: by 1992 almost 900,000 major earthquakes! (one every hour)

# Sign 2: Reestablishment of Israel

- Actually, Israel is regathered TWICE, once for judgment, once for blessing.
  - For judgment: Ezekiel 20:33-38; 22:17-20
  - For blessing: Isaiah 11:11-12; Ezek 36:22-24
- The regathering of wrath takes place before the **regeneration** for blessing.
- Note Ezekiel 20:33-38:

- *"Surely with a mighty hand...and with wrath poured out...I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out; and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will enter into judgment with you face to face. As I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you... I will purge from you the rebels and those who transgress against Me; I will bring them out of the land where they sojourn, but they will not enter the land of Israel. Thus you will know that I am the LORD."*

- *Thus says the Lord GOD, "Because all of you have become dross, therefore, behold, I am going to gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver and bronze and iron and lead and tin into the furnace to blow fire on it in order to melt it, so I will gather you in My anger and in My wrath and I will lay you there and melt you. I will gather you and blow on you with the fire of My wrath, and you will be melted in the midst of it. As silver is melted in the furnace, so you will be melted in the midst of it; and you will know that I, the LORD, have poured out My wrath on you"* (Ezekiel 22:17–22; cf. Isa 1:22, 25; 48:10; Jer 6:27–30; 9:7; Zech 13:9; Mal 3:2–3).

# Regathering Occurs Before the Regeneration

- *Thus says the Lord GOD, "It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went. I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD... when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight. For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land."*

- *Then it will happen on that day that the Lord will again recover **the second time** with His hand the remnant of His people, who will remain, from Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And He will lift up a standard for the nations and assemble the banished ones of Israel, and will gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth" (Isaiah 11:11–12).*

- If the second regathering is the last one, and it is for blessing, then there cannot be several regatherings in unbelief *from the four corners of the earth* (Isa 11:11-12:6).
- Thus, the present state of Israel **is the final state** before the regathering for blessing.
- Why? Isaiah 11:11–12:6 speaks of the **final** worldwide regathering in faith in prep for blessing—the **second** (11:11) one. That means *the last one is only the second one*. Hence, the first one (Israel's present state) is a sign that precedes the Rapture.

- So if the last one is the second one, *then the present one is the regathering for wrath.*
- The first one could not have been the return from Babylon since that was not an international regathering from the four corners of the world, only a migration from one country (Babylonia) to another (Judea).
- The Bible does not allow for several worldwide regatherings in unbelief; it allows for one worldwide regathering in unbelief, followed by the last one, the one in faith, which is the second one of Isaiah 11:11.

- Note that after the Nazi Holocaust the Jews were THEN brought into their land. Many had come there prior, but they had no control over their land; no governing power. Thus, the Holocaust cannot be interpreted as God drawing the Jews from the four corners of the earth for judgment. Rather, the Holocaust brought them to the land for future judgment.

- Isaiah 11:11 only permits two worldwide regatherings from the four corners of the earth. Therefore, the present Jewish State is very relevant to Bible prophecy.
- It is not outlandish to see it as a sign Jesus spoke of before the Rapture.

- After speaking of the Day of the Lord—the Tribulation (Zephaniah 1:7-18)—the prophet says: *“Gather yourselves together, yes, gather, O nation without shame, before the decree takes effect— The day passes like the chaff— before the burning anger of the LORD comes upon you, before the day of the LORD’s anger comes upon you.”*
- While other texts speak of a regathering in unbelief in preparation for judgment, Zephaniah says that this regathering in unbelief will occur before the Tribulation actually begins.

# Sign 3: Jerusalem Under Jewish Control

- After the end of the Israeli War of Independence in 1948–1949, Israeli forces controlled West Jerusalem. The Old City, however, fell into the hands of the Jordanian Legion and was later annexed into the Hashemite kingdom of Jordan. So Jerusalem became a divided city and remained that way for the next 19 years.

- Nevertheless, prophetically speaking, the Old City of Jerusalem has to fall under Jewish control. This can be deduced from the prophecies dealing with the third Jewish Temple, sometimes known as the Tribulation Temple.
- There are four passages of Scripture that speak of a specific event in relation to the Tribulation Temple that will occur in the middle of the Tribulation. They are as follows: Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4

# Daniel 9:27

- *And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.*
- Hence, a temple must exist before the Antichrist desecrates it.

# Matthew 24:15

- *Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand),"*

## 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4

- *“Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.”*

# So What?

- In lieu of what we know about the end times, *“Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near”* (Hebrews 10:24–25, NLT).