

Introduction

At the end of each year we record a summary of recent events as they relate to Bible prophecy. There is a continual flood of interesting news and developments that convince us that we are indeed in the End Times!

Each year the news is more pressing and our report gets longer, so we have decided to provide it as a book—in printed and electronic formats. Most of the information in this report has come from news stories and quotations from the daily updates posted on the Prophecy Centralⁱ web site. There are more than one hundred different sections on the site that deal with the various topics that we cover.

Each of these sections is devoted to a particular aspect of prophecy. These pages typically start with a brief summary of the importance of that subject, followed by a list of pertinent Scripture references that are linked to online Bible sites for easy reading and access to other study tools and commentaries. Important current events are collected on each page during the year with the headline and a brief summary. Visitors can link to

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the original article and read our summary of the story. The summaries remain for the sake of historical review, even if the original news articles are no longer on line.

We have also included information from our blogs, commentary on Revelation, and other books we have written.

The information is presented in the order of Jesus' own teaching about the future. In this way the book will not only be an accumulation of interesting information, but it will be an overview of the whole scope of things to come.

A Preview of the Bottom Line

Before we begin our review of some very bad news and terrifying prophecies, we should take notice of the fact that it all has a glorious ending and the Bible is still the "Good News!" Christians often say something like this: "Don't worry. I've read the end of the book and it turns out great."

Prophecy comprises more than one-fourth of the Bible, and believe it or not, most of it is good news! The prophecies of the first coming of Messiah were certainly good news. And the massive amount of Bible teaching about the Millennial Age and beyond is unquestionably positive!

But admittedly, much of "End Time prophecy" is depressing. We should remember that Jesus called this phase of the future "labor pains." Just as the birth of a baby is preceded by difficult and painful labor, the birth of the Millennium, and after that, the glorious New Heaven and Earth, is preceded by the Tribulation.

We need to balance our study of prophecy with a reminder that God is still on His throne. He is the loving, all-powerful Creator and the designer of our incredible salvation.

The Gospel is the "Good News." The Bible is His love letter to us. The incredible Creation is His handicraft. The Family is His

idea. Israel is still His chosen people. And the Church is the greatest expression of His power and purpose during this age.

Additionally, the Bible tells us repeatedly not to be afraid! So let's forge ahead in our study!

Organization of this book:

Jesus' own famous message about the future is known as the Olivet Discourse. He spoke of a time of Tribulation, which was also foretold by Daniel's "Seventieth Week" (Daniel 9:26-27), and by Jeremiah's "Time of Jacob's Trouble" (Jeremiah 30:5-7).

Beginning of Birth-Pains (Matthew 24:3-8)

Before the Tribulation begins there is a period of increasing tensions that Jesus called "the beginning of sorrows [literally: birth-pains].

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. – Matthew 24:3-7

We will track three major aspects of this period of time that precedes the Tribulation: 1- Apostasy, 2- Judgment and 3-

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Revival.

Apostasy means “falling away.” This is the unfortunate condition of Christians who have lost their first love for Christ, have accepted unbiblical teaching, and have become worldly in their thinking and actions. It is a description of many in our generation. Fortunately, there are also many faithful believers in these difficult days.

Judgment is a description of many of the “Signs of the Times” during this build-up to the Tribulation. It includes a number of natural and supernatural events that serve as warnings or discipline to those who fear God, and as punishment for those who will not obey Him.

Revival is the response of those who recognize their need for salvation. It begins with prayer and confession of sin, and results in a powerful spiritual awakening. It is available to individuals who are willing to repent and accept Christ’s sacrificial death as payment for their sins, and for Christians who have already been a part of the family of God, but who have drifted away, and want to return to the Lord. Hopefully there will also be a large-scale revival of groups and cultures in these critical days because God loves the world (John 3:16) and is not willing that any should perish (2 Peter 3:9).

The Rapture

Jesus did not mention the Rapture in His Olivet Discourse because it was not the right time to reveal this key aspect of the Church Age, which, as we will discuss later, was a “mystery”—a truth not yet revealed. He had indeed announced the creation of the Church in a private lesson for His Twelve Disciples (Matthew 16:15-18). However, the details of its commencement, when the Holy Spirit would descend (at Pentecost – Acts 2) were given by The Lord shortly before His

ascension into Heaven (Acts 1:4-8). The nature of the Church, which would be explained later by Paul; and its end-point—the Rapture, or “catching away” of believers—were yet to be revealed.

However, Jesus had told His followers that He would go away to build a place for them, and would return again to receive them to Himself (John 14:1-3).

There are various views about the timing of the Rapture. We will list the reasons to believe that it will take place just before the beginning of the Tribulation.

The Tribulation (Matthew 24:8-14)

The seven-year Tribulation is divided into two equal time spans of three and a half years. This division is predicted by Daniel’s ancient description of a seven year peace covenant with Israel that will be broken in the middle of its term by some abomination in the rebuilt Temple (Daniel 9:27 cf. Daniel 7:25; 12:7-11). Jesus also mentioned this “abomination of desolation” (Matthew 24:14), and a number of passages in the Book of Revelation show that it will occur at the three-and-one-half year mark (Revelation 11:2; 11:3; 12:14; 13:5). Jesus referred to this whole period as “Tribulation,” but called the last half of it “Great Tribulation.” We will consider current events that could be preparing the way for the first part of the Tribulation including the opening of the first four seals (Revelation 6).

The Great Tribulation (Matthew 24:15-28)

Some current events relate more to the drama of the Great Tribulation. These include the rise of a global government and a world-wide religion, the work of an unholy trinity, and the economic dictatorship of the beast who will

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require people to worship him in order to have the privilege of buying and selling.

The story will end badly for the beast. He will be conquered during the Campaign of Armageddon when Christ returns as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

After The Tribulation (Matthew 24:29-31)

Christ's enemies will all be exterminated during the Campaign of Armageddon (Revelation 19:11-21). Resurrected believers will reign with Christ during the 1000 year "Millennium" (Revelation 20:4-6). True believers who have somehow survived through the Tribulation will be brought by angels (Matthew 13:24-30; 25:31-46; Mark 13:24-27) to populate the Earth, in its restored condition. Jesus will reign in righteousness and the amazing Old Testament promises of the Kingdom Age will be fulfilled.

Finally, there will be a New Heaven and a New Earth—a sinless, eternal place where we will dwell forever with The Lord! (Revelation Chapters 21-22)

ⁱ Prophecy Central – <http://www.Bible-prophecy.com>