

## Message #54 of *Scripture Beneath The Surface*

### *"Great Tribulation"*

With Randy Smith

(269) 763-2114

### ***Preparation Ministries, Inc***

PO BOX 475 OLIVET, MI 49076

[preparationministries@gmail.com](mailto:preparationministries@gmail.com)

*(Please feel free to call, write, or send e-mails)*

Web Site: <http://www.preparationministries.net>

### **Broadcast Schedule**

WOLY AM 1500 - Battle Creek, MI - Sat. 10am - Sun. 9:30am

KFNX AM 1100 - Phoenix, AZ - Sun. 9:30am

KXKS AM 1190 - Albuquerque, NM - Sun. 8:30am

KWDF AM 840 - Alexandria, LA - Sun. 12:00pm

WLQV AM 1500 - Detroit, MI, Sun. 10:00am

*Also, Internet Stream - [www.am1500wlqv.com](http://www.am1500wlqv.com)*

WFPM

99.5 FM in Battle Creek - Fri. 3:30pm

99.9 FM in Albion - Fri. 3:30pm

103.7 FM in Jackson - Fri. 3:30pm

*Also, Internet Stream - [www.wfpmradio.org](http://www.wfpmradio.org)*

Hello! Thanks for being with us. Today I'd like to talk to you about the Bible event which is referred to as, "The Great Tribulation." And first, and foremost, I'd like you to recognize that this Great and Terrible Day of the Lord is an event that is completely separate from the Great Tribulation. There's quite a bit of confusion in the church today concerning these two events, and because of the confusion, the pre-tribulation rapture theory has been proposed to the church. This of course has also given us the left behind concept, where those who were not ready when the Lord returns would be left behind and would then have to suffer beheading by a guillotine in order to enter heaven. However, as we approach the end of time, it is becoming more and more clear that the Great Tribulation is underway, and we Christians are still here. In fact, it is my belief that the Great Tribulation is even now in process, but not in the same sense as has been taught in our churches.

Now, the reason that the Bible refers to this last tribulation experience as the Great Tribulation is because this last tribulation is said to be greater than ever was in the history of the world or ever will be in the future. Many proponents of the pre-tribulation rapture theory have assumed that this means a greater physical slaughter of Christians than ever happened before. But the reason the Bible refers to this last tribulation as being greater than ever in the history of the world or ever will be, is that the actual tribulation is not a tribulation of our flesh and blood bodies, but a tribulation which is aimed at the very souls of people. Let me explain.

In the past history of the world there have been many sufferings by Christians. And in fact, the sufferings have been very great. However, no matter how many Christians were tortured, or were

beheaded, crucified, burned at the stake, or killed by wild animals, still, the only tribulation was a physical tribulation. The only thing in danger was the danger of losing the life of this world, but there was never a danger of losing the life hereafter. And it is specifically the life hereafter that Christians are most concerned about. It is eternal life that is so precious to us. Jesus himself said that no matter what they do to the body, there would never be harm to even one hair of our head. This means that the enemies of Christ may very well kill our bodies, and we may very well have to give our bodies to be burned, but because our salvation is assured in Christ, we will never have to be afraid of death. We have the promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ, and because of this promise, we may be killed on this earth, but we will ultimately be raised from the dead and be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and we will forever be alive with the Lord.

It is not death of the body that is the greatest tribulation, because when the body dies, we who are born again in spirit and have put on Christ will live forever. The real danger is the tribulation which comes against our souls, because if we lose our soul, we have lost Christ. If we lose our earthly bodies of flesh and blood, we will live again. But if we give up our souls, there is no future life to come.

In this last Great Tribulation, Satan's purpose is not just to kill the body, because he well knows that the body is disposable. He well knows that the only death that will destroy the salvation of Christians is to destroy their very souls. And his plan to do this requires much more than to kill the body. In order for Satan to kill the souls of people, he must cause them to turn away from Christ. You see, if a person loves Jesus, and dies the death of a martyr, then the soul is assured of eternal life with Christ. But if the person denies Christ, and then dies, then that person has given up their soul to Satan and they will suffer the eternal torment of hell.

I guess what a person has to understand is that when the Law of Commandments was still in effect, the Children of Israel were required to be good. They were required to keep the law diligently, and the punishment for breaking the Law was death. No, not just physical death, but God had decreed that when the Law was broken, the only punishment was to die. And once a person died, there was no hope. In the Old Testament, there was no deliverance from death. It was only when Jesus Christ died on the cross, defeating death, that a promise of resurrection and a new life in Jesus Christ was made possible.

In the Old Testament, Satan could become the owner of anyone who sinned. Death was promised for all sinners, because no sinner was able to come into the presence of God. For as it says in Habakkuk 1:13, "God cannot look on iniquity." In fact, this was the reason that the veil in the Israelite temple separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. God dwelled above the Mercy Seat in the Most Holy Place, and the veil of the temple separated this Most Holy Place from anyone who would come in. The only person who could enter into this Most Holy Place was the high priest, and could then only enter in once a year. And it was also required that this high priest had to have blood applied to him when entering in, otherwise he would die, because otherwise, God would kill him.

When Jesus died on the cross, the veil of the temple was torn in two from the top to the bottom, and as the book of Hebrews tells us, Christ is now our high priest who has managed to enter through the veil and into the very presence of God. In fact, Hebrews 9:24 tells us that Christ has not just entered into an earthly temple, but into the very presence of God in heaven, and therefore, all those who put on Christ also enter into the presence of God.

You see, when we put on Christ, which effectively means that we become part of the body of Christ, we enter with Christ into God's presence. It is only when we become part of the body of Christ that we can be received into God's presence, because we no longer are indebted to sin but have been cleansed from all unrighteousness and have been given the righteousness of God.

Now here's the important thing to understand. Up until the time that Jesus died on the cross, Satan was victorious over anyone who sinned. All those who sinned were denied access to God, therefore they were given up to Satan as the victor. But when Jesus died, he led the captives free by giving them the righteousness that they had not earned and doing away with the Law of Commandments which had condemned them. Jesus Christ redeemed us from the curse of sin, and redeemed us from being indebted to Satan. In Christ, there is no law, and therefore there is no transgression. All those in Christ are righteous, and will be able to enter into the presence of God. Therefore, Satan is the loser. Instead of being victorious over all sinners, he can now only be victorious over sinners if they reject Jesus Christ as their redeemer. Do you see this. In the New Covenant of Grace, sinners are washed white as snow if they put on Christ. If they accept Jesus Christ, he becomes their Savior, and Satan is denied access.

This is referred to quite clearly in Revelation, chapter 12. In fact, let me read verses 7 through 11. It says, "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and also his angels, 8 And they did not prevail; neither were they found anywhere in heaven anymore. 9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, who deceives the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. 10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now has come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, who accused them before our God day and night. 11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."

Now, notice a couple of things here. In verse 9 it said that Satan was cast out of heaven. And in verse 10 it further explains that Satan was the accuser of the brethren, and that the accuser of the brethren was cast down out of heaven. What this is telling us is that when Jesus Christ defeated death, and also defeated sin, the Law of Commandments which condemned sinners to death was done away, and because the Law was done away, there was no longer a curse of death for those who sinned. However, without believing that Jesus is Lord and Savior, no salvation takes place. Those who reject Christ are still born of the flesh and will still die. The reason for this is that all the descendants of Adam are born after the flesh, just as Adam was flesh and blood. And as it says in 1 Corinthians 15:22, all those who are born as descendants of Adam will die. It is only those who are born into Christ that will live. And the reason we who accept Christ will live is

because we no longer live after the manner of the flesh, but we are born again in spirit, and live because the spirit of God in us is life. Adam was only a living soul, but Jesus Christ was born a life giving spirit. As it says in Leviticus 17:11, the life of the flesh is in the blood. But as it says in John 6:63, it is the Spirit that quickens us, for the Spirit gives life.

When we are born again in spirit, we have new life in Christ. We will live forever with him because we have accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Christ has redeemed all those from the curse of sin by giving them life in the spirit. All those who put on Christ will live in Christ forever.

So, here's where the problem of the Great Tribulation comes in. You see, now that Jesus has redeemed us from the curse of the Law, Satan cannot claim us as his own just because we have sinned. In fact, as we read in Revelation 12, Satan can no longer go before God and accuse us of sin. If he were to accuse us, God might answer him like this. "Begone, Satan. My children are righteous, for they have been cleansed from sin by the blood of my son. Under what law can you accuse them? There is no law to them, for they abide in my Son, Jesus. Be gone, you false accuser. You have no right to accuse them before me."

You see, Satan immediately had a big problem on his hands as soon as Jesus Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law. Because sin would no longer prevent us from entering into God's presence, Satan's best accusations would be useless. So what Satan must do in order to claim us as his own is to get people to reject Christ, to reject God completely, and to accept Satan as owner. Now, of course, you would say that this is an impossibility. But not so fast. Think about it. Much of the world has already accepted Satan as their owner. They have rejected Christ, and instead have chosen to live their lives according to the flesh instead of according to the Holy Spirit of God.

Much of the world has already given up their souls, and have decided that the world is much more fun than the heavenly things of God. Of course, Christians don't think so. They think that heavenly things are wonderful. But just think of the way the world has gotten worse in these last hundred years. It used to be that the things of this world were interesting in a fleshly lustful way, but in these last 100 years the world has changed dramatically. The temptations of the world have been multiplied beyond belief, especially since science and technology have blossomed. In fact, the temptations have multiplied tremendously since the invention of electricity, and the result has been computer technology which has opened up a fantastic array of toys and delights like no one in the history of the world had ever imagined.

Now, think about this one thing. Because the temptations of the world have evolved into fabulous delights, many people who were previously happy with heavenly things have been coerced into worshiping the works of man's hands instead of worshiping God. Mankind has become enamored with the technologies of this world, and the things of God appear to be somewhat less miraculous than they were previously. Because science has expanded far past man's wildest imaginations, the imaginations of mankind have been stimulated even more. As

God said in Genesis 11:6, when viewing the Tower of Babel, “now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.”

Mankind has largely rejected God, and is quickly replacing him with a belief that they can overcome the threat of death through science. The technologies of man have become so advanced that the miracles of Jesus Christ begin to dim. No, mankind has not been able to overcome death yet, but they are gaining on it. And in concert with tremendous temptations of the flesh is the false promise of science that man will soon no longer need God, for man will be able to exalt themselves above the throne of God and will do this not with God’s power, but with their own might and power.

But the real problem is for Christians, and for those who would be Christians. This great advance of science and technology in these last days causes men to lose trust in God, and at the same time to increase their trust in the strength of the world. Doctors and medicines abound, and science has made great progress in increasing the life span of humans. This in itself is an encouragement to trust in science rather than trusting in God. People have always been tempted by evil, but never at such a pace as this. Never has man been offered such living standards and such hope of eternal life in the flesh. Together, these offerings of Satan have tempted man to turn away from God, and from Jesus Christ, because the hope of mankind has been transferred to the false promises of Satan.

The world would reject Christ if the time were not shortened. Even Jesus himself said this. If the time were not shortened, even the elect would be lost. And this is the hope that Satan has. He can no longer destroy God’s people because of sin, because in Christ they have overcome him. But through the great multitude of earth’s delicacies in these times of increasing science and technology, the children of God are under a greater tribulation than they ever were in the history of the planet. The danger to God’s children is not to their flesh, but to their souls. Satan is hoping to win them over, not by their sin, but by their rejection of Christ. The temptation to reject Christ has never been so strong in the history of the world as it is today. No, the elect of God will not be deceived because God will shorten the time. But know this; if Jesus himself said that even the elect would be deceived given enough time, then certainly you and I would be at risk.

The real problem though is that no Christian ever thinks that it could be them. But look around you. You yourself are aware of many around you in your lifetime who have gone back to the world. This is a common problem in the church. No, they aren’t condemned because of the Law, but are condemned because they choose to serve Satan instead of serving God. The world is too much temptation for them, and they turn back to it.

The Great Tribulation is taking place now, and those in the church are falling away fast. As we see more and more fall away and go back to the world, we must come to realize that the society we live in is much more dangerous than we give it credit for. We always say that no matter how many turn away from Christ and go back to the world, we would never turn back. But how many of those who have already turned back once said the same thing? How many of those who have

gone back to the world once said they would die for Christ if need be. How many of those who have turned back have turned back because they got discouraged, and the excessive temptations of this world drew them away, and the awesome science and technology of the world convinced them that maybe they still had some hope of life through the strength of man instead of through the strength of God.

---

Let's take a moment and think about what it means to be in Great Tribulation. Revelation 3:10 is a reference to this. It says, "Because you have patiently kept my word, I also will keep you from the hour of trial, which will come upon all the world, to try those who dwell upon the earth." Now, notice that it said that the trial that would come upon the earth was a trial to try men's souls. It's not a trial of the flesh, but a trial of a man's soul. What has actually taken place since the discovery of electricity is that science and technology have grown astronomically, causing more worldly temptations than ever were in the history of the world. And this is exactly why the tribulation is greater than in the history of the world. Mankind has never before been tempted to such a great extent as he is now.

Yet, there is coming the day, and soon I hope, that God will call a halt to it. Because the time must be shortened in order to protect the elect children of God, the Great Tribulation will come to its conclusion. No, not because the temptations will go away, but because God himself will declare a halt to the temptations of his people. The Bible tells us in Malachi 4:2 that when it is time, the Sun of righteousness will rise up with healing in its wings. Revelation 19:15 tells us that the sword that will come out of the Lord's mouth is going to destroy the wicked. It is the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Therefore, when the times have been fulfilled, the truth will come forth from God unto his children. And those children who have been tossed to and fro by many difficult doctrines and half truths will be given the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. It is at this precise time in our coming prophetic events that our Great Tribulation will be over, for we will no longer be deceived by the seemingly miraculous temptations of the world social system and by its science and technology, but will be overcomers of Satan's lies because we will have the truth of God presented to us in full. It is the lies of Satan which confuse us, and cause us to lose the power and understanding of God's word, but it is the truth of God's word which will set us free. Just as it always has been and just as it always will be, the truth of God's word will set us free, and we will no longer come under the confusion of Satan's lies again. At this time it will be Satan who will enter into confusion, greater than in the history of the world, for his whole system will begin to crumble and to fall. But even though everything will be crumbling and falling around us, and even some men's hearts failing them for fear, we Christians will be able to rejoice in the midst of it, for there will never be another tribulation to fear, for our fear is taken away in Jesus Christ.