

Tribulation Fear or Glory

Revelation 13:9,10

Whoever has ears, let them hear.

“If anyone is to go into captivity, into captivity they will go. If anyone is to be killed with the sword, with the sword they will be killed.”

This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of God’s people.

When I speak of the tribulation and the fact that God has not promised that Christians will escape the tribulation by a pre-tribulation rapture. The listener usually responds with fear. This is because there has been such a vast amount of teaching that the tribulation is to be a time of trial for God’s people the Jews as well as the nations. So, Christians feel that if they aren’t raptured, then they will be caught up in the trial also.

Let me attempt to bring a better clarity to these last seven years before God’s kingdom and what will happen to God’s people during that time.

First: This is not a time of God’s trial for God’s people.

Daniel 12:1 Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard of the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued.

Second: There is no distinction between Christian and Jew when it comes to who is found written in the book. We are all children of Abraham and saved by Jesus Christ who is the Living Torah. We are all written in the book if we have been saved by Jesus. And everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued. In the time of tribulation God is going to do miraculous things to protect His people even though Satan and the Anti-Christ will be doing everything they can to destroy God’s people. God’s miracles will be greater than when He delivered the Children of Israel from the land of Egypt.

Third: The purpose of the tribulation is to prepare the world for God’s kingdom and to do this God will rid the world of wickedness. In Jeremiah, he tells him to prophesy to all the kingdoms on the face of the earth (Jeremiah 25:26).

Jeremiah 25:30-38

“Now prophesy all these words against them and say to them: “The Lord will roar from on high; he will thunder from his holy dwelling and roar mightily against his land. He will shout like those who tread the grapes, shout against all who live on the earth. The tumult will resound to the ends of the earth, for the Lord will bring charges against the nations; he will bring judgement on all mankind and put the wicked to the sword.” declares the Lord.

This is what the Lord Almighty says: “Look! Disaster is spreading from nation to nation; a mighty storm is rising from the ends of the earth.” At that time those slain by the Lord will be everywhere – from one end of the earth to the other. They will not be mourned or gathered up or buried, but will be like dung lying on the ground.

Weep and wail, you shepherds; roll in the dust, you leaders of the flock. For your time to be slaughtered has come; you will fall like the best of the rams. The shepherds will have nowhere to flee, the leaders of the flock no place to escape. Hear the cry of the shepherds, the wailing of the leaders of the flock, for the Lord is destroying their pasture. The peaceful meadows will be laid waste because of the fierce anger of the Lord. Like a lion he will leave his lair, and their land will become desolate because of the sword of the oppressor and because of the Lord's fierce anger.

It is the wicked that will be killed with the sword. But God will protect His people in a miraculous way even though the evil ones will try to destroy Jerusalem. During the tribulation, they will fail.

Zechariah 12:3 It will come about in that day I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it.

During the time of the tribulation God will save His people and specifically Jerusalem at least three times in a mighty way. First as we read in Ezekiel 38 and 39, God is going to draw (put hooks in your jaws) Gog, Meshek and Tubal against Israel with all their armies. Gog, Meshek and Tubal in today's geography will be Russia, Turkey and Iran. They will be joined by other nations and come against Israel in a vast army to overtake Israel. But the Lord will save Israel before they can come against it.

Ezekiel 38:17-23

"This is what the Sovereign Lord says: You are the one I spoke of in former days by my servants the prophets of Israel. At that time they prophesied for years that I would bring you against them. This is what will happen in that day: When Gog attacks the land of Israel, my hot anger will be aroused, declares the Sovereign Lord. In my Zeal and fiery wrath I declare that at that time there shall be a great earthquake in the land of Israel. The fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the beasts of the field, every creature that moves along the ground, and all the people on the face of the earth will tremble at my presence. The mountains will be overturned, the cliffs will crumble and every wall will fall to the ground. I will summon a sword against Gog on all my mountains, declares the Sovereign Lord. Every man's sword will be against his brother. I will execute judgement on him with plague and bloodshed; I will pour down torrents of rain, hailstones and burning sulfur on him and on his troops and on the many nations with him. And so I will show my greatness and my holiness, and I will make myself known in the sight of many nations. Then they will know that I am the Lord."

God will destroy the enemies who come against Israel by miraculous means. This battle is not far off. Russia has recently made a deal with Iran and having talks with Turkey. This battle will probably be the opening battle for the tribulation period.

The second time we will see a miraculous salvation of God's people is at the time the Anti-Christ takes over the temple. If we study only the New Testament, we may be led to believe this is a bleak time for those in Jerusalem and indeed many have taught this. But we need to add the Hebrew scriptures to see the whole picture.

Let's start with Jesus's words in Matthew:

Matthew 24:15-21

"So, when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation' spoken of through the prophet Daniel – let the reader understand – then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let no one on the housetops go down to take anything out of the house. Let no one in the field go back to get their cloak. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! Pray that

your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath. For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now – and never to be equaled again.”

This sounds pretty dire for Judea. Let's turn to Revelation and see this same event from John's vision:

Revelation 12:13-17

When the dragon saw that he had been hurled to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. The woman was given the two wings of a great eagle, so that she might fly to the place prepared for her in the wilderness, where she would be taken care of for a time, times and half a time, out of the serpent's reach. Then from his mouth the serpent spewed water like a river, to overtake the woman and sweep her away with the torrent. But the earth helped the woman by opening its mouth and swallowing the river that the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to wage war against the rest of her offspring – those who keep God's commands and hold fast their testimony about Jesus.

The language used here is very specifically used to lead us to Hebrew prophecy so we can understand what is being said. It is also explained in the context around it. We know the dragon is Satan because we are told so earlier in Revelation 12:9. We know the woman is Israel because of the description of her in the first six verses of chapter 12, only Israel gave birth to a male child who would rule the world with an iron scepter, We know this from prophecy of the Messiah. When Satan pursues the woman, she is given the two wings of a great eagle. This reflects the language of Exodus 19:4 where God reminds the Israelites that He bore them “on eagles wings” out of Egypt. And that tells us that the woman's flight from the dragon will be helped by God as he helped Israel out of Egypt. She flees to the wilderness where a place is prepared for her. In Matthew we are only told to flee, but here we see that there is a place prepared, and she will be taken care of.

Now the dragon or serpent spewed water out of his mouth to overtake the woman. This symbolizes a vast army and who would Satan use for an army, the Anti-Christ. This comes into focus in chapter 13 of Revelation with the rising of the Beast which is speaking of the Anti-Christ. So, the Anti-Christ sends an army after Israel as it flees into the wilderness. And then the earth helped the woman by opening its mouth and swallowing the river. Well, how did that happen and where is this place in the wilderness?

To find the answer to those questions we need to turn to the prophets.

Micah 2:12,13

“I will surely gather all of you, Jacob; I will surely bring together the remnant of Israel. I will bring them together like sheep in a pen, like a flock in its pasture; the place will throng with people. The One who breaks open the way will go before them; they will break through the gate and go out. Their King will pass through before them, the Lord at their head.”

So, we see them gathered up and brought together, led by One who goes before them. Their King. The Lord at their head. Sounds like the Messiah himself gathers them up and helps them get into the wilderness.

But who takes care of the armies? How does the earth swallow them up? Let's turn to Isaiah.

Isaiah 34:1-6

Come near, you nations, and listen; pay attention, you peoples! Let the earth hear, and all that is in it, the world, and all that comes out of it! The Lord is angry with all nations; his wrath is on all their armies. He

will totally destroy them; he will give them over to slaughter. Their slain will be thrown out, their dead bodies will stink; the mountains will be soaked with their blood. All the stars in the sky will be dissolved and the heavens rolled up like a scroll; all the starry host will fall like withered leaves from the vine, like shriveled figs from the fig tree. My sword has drunk its fill in the heavens; see, it descends in judgement on Edom, the people I have totally destroyed. The sword of the Lord is bathed in blood, it is covered with fat – the blood of lambs and goats, fat from the kidneys of rams. For the Lord has a sacrifice in Bozrah and a great slaughter in the land of Edom.

Now we see more. The Lord slaughters the armies, and the place is in Bozrah which is Hebrew for Petra in the Greek which is in Jordan which was Edom in the Old Testament. We know that this is a prophecy of the end times because the prophet uses the end time symbols 'the heavens rolled up like a scroll' etc. We know this isn't the last battle at Armageddon because we are told it is in Edom at Bozrah which is Petra today. So, this is the place in the wilderness that God's people flee from the Anti-Christ during the tribulation, and we see that the Lord gathers them, leads them, and then slaughters the armies of the nations who pursue.

This is even more clear in Isaiah 63:

Isaiah 63:1-6

Who is this coming from Edom, from Bozrah, with his garments stained crimson? Who is this, robed in splendor, striding forward in the greatness of his strength? "It is I, proclaiming victory, mighty to save." Why are your garments red, like those of one treading the winepress? "I have trodden the winepress alone; from the nations no one was with me. I trampled them in my anger and trod them down in my wrath; their blood spattered my garments, and I stained all my clothing. It was for me the day of vengeance; the year for me to redeem had come. I looked, but there was no one to help, I was appalled that no one gave support; so, my own arm achieved salvation for me, and my own wrath sustained me. I trampled the nations in my anger; in my wrath I made them drunk and poured their blood on the ground."

To repeat, we see that in the middle of the tribulation when the Anti-Christ takes over the temple in Jerusalem and the people of God flee to the mountains, God steps in and leads on wings of eagles, He gathers, He has a place prepared and then He slaughters the armies that pursue.

The third time that God saves his people is at the end of the tribulation when the Messiah returns to the Mount of Olives with the hosts of heaven and takes out the armies of the nations which are once more gathered at Armageddon to destroy Jerusalem and Israel. This I don't need to go into since it is more commonly taught.

The message here is simple. If you are wicked, you should fear the tribulation for it will destroy you. But, if you are one of God's people you will see the Glory of God presented multiple times even beyond what was seen as God led His people out of Egypt. The tribulation will be a time of Glory for God's people.

May Yeshua HaMashiah who is Jesus Christ the Messiah the Living Torah keep your hearts and minds and give you peace for these last days.

Thank you,

A Voice in The Wilderness