

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Revelation: God's Revelation To His Servants Today On Events About To Occur

Part IV: "The Things Which Shall Be Hereafter": Events After The Rapture Of The Church

C. The Great Tribulation Period, Revelation 6:1-19:21

5. A Second View Of The Great Tribulation Guiding Us To Avoid Group Idolatry, Revelation 11:1-19:21

c. God's Guidance On PERSEVERING Amid Evil Oppression

(Revelation 12:13-13:10)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

(1) Last Sunday after our worship service, a Church member told me he is finding what he hears in the media so oppressively upsetting, he is "tuning it out" altogether. This is a big step for him, for he is a public school teacher who, along with many fellow teachers over the years, has urged his students to listen to the news to be well informed.

Even media leaders acknowledge the problem. Longtime notable news media personality Barbara Walters who retires this year, in an interview by AARP The Magazine ("What I Know Now," April-May 2014, p. 13), claimed that TV news has degenerated over the years, that now "(t)here's no privacy. There's nothing that's sacred . . . It also used to be that . . . you did not give opinions . . . Today, in order to be successful, you have to be opinionated."

(2) The government is steeped in oppressive activity: local radio talk show host Brad Davis on "The Talk of Connecticut" Wednesday said he was "thoroughly disgusted" with the U. S. President and Congress since they were not serving the needs of the people. Brad claimed he hardly ever makes such a broad criticism, but that now he is!

On top of this, the Supreme Court last week refused to hear cases on banning gay marriage in various states, thereby solidifying gay marriage for those states in contrast to God's judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah in the Bible!

(3) I personally have heard many Christians express how oppressed they feel over the wrongs they see being promoted in all kinds of institutions at all sorts of levels, with many wondering how they can deal with it all.

Need: *So, we ask, "As evil seems oppressively relentless today, what guidance does God offer on withstanding it?!"*

I. Though Rev. 12:13-13:10 predicts events to occur after God takes the Church to heaven in the rapture, Revelation 1:1-3 reveals the book of Revelation offers insight for believers who live in TODAY'S world!

II. Revelation 12:13-13:10 thus offers God's GUIDANCE in OUR need dependently to PERSEVERE in FAITH in GOD'S SCRIPTURE PROMISES amid OPPRESSIVE EVILS that WE face (as follows):

- A. Revelation 12:13-13:8 explains the afflictions people in the Great Tribulation will face from the antichrist:
1. When the 7th trumpet judgment sounds (Rev. 11:15), introducing the third "woe" (Rev. 11:14) of Satan's wrathful abuses toward men on the earth (Rev. 12:12), he will first pursue Israel to try to annihilate her (Rev. 12:13 with 12:1-2, 5), trying to destroy God's Genesis 12:1-3 Abrahamic Covenant and thereby to unseat God as God. The Lord will **allow** Satan to pursue Israel since she as a nation will then be guilty of the capital offense of having compromised her temple court with apostate Gentiles [seen in Rev. 11:1-2].
 2. However God Himself, with the figurative 2 wings of a great eagle as in Israel's Exodus (cf. Ex. 19:4), will enable Israel to flee into the wilderness to be nourished for the last 3 1/2 yrs. of the Great Tribulation, Rev. 12:13-14. Satan's wrath in the antichrist's pursuit of Israel will be leveled at her like a flood coming out of his mouth (Rev. 12:15 with Hos. 5:10), but God will utilize or manipulate the terrain to let a remnant escape (Rev. 12:16). This deliverance will further infuriate Satan, so he will turn to make war with the remnant of her "seed," i. e. the remnant who trust in Christ (Gal. 3:16), elsewhere on the earth, Rev. 12:17.
 3. Meanwhile, 1/3 of the nation Israel will survive, having been spiritually purified by God, Zech. 13:8-9.
 4. Early manuscripts show Rev. 13:1a KJV that claims **John** stood on the *shore* should be Rev. 12:18 where **Satan** stands on the *shore* (Bruce M. Metzger, A Text. Com. on the Grk. N. T., 1971, p. 748), so **Satan** on the *shore* gives the antichrist with the Revived Roman empire that rises from the *nearby "sea"* of Gentiles (Rev. 13:1 with 10:2 and Dan. 7:3) his power, throne and great authority, Rev. 13:2b NIV. The Rev. 13:1 beast from the sea will *later* [Rev. 17:8-13] be identified as the Revived Roman Empire led by antichrist (Rev. 17:8-13; Ryrie S. B., KJV, 1978, fn. to Rev. 13:1). It will have parts of (a) the Dan. 7:6 leopard, Greece, (b) the Dan. 7:5 bear, Medo-Persia and (c) the Dan. 7:4 lion, Babylon (Rev. 13:2a; *Ibid.*, fn. to Dan. 7:4; 7:5 and 7:6), confirming the Daniel 2:31-45 vision that these empires' residual elements will together be destroyed by Jesus Christ in His judgment of the Revived Roman Empire at His coming.
 5. To get men to trust in the antichrist, Satan will heal his deadly wound, giving a false impression (2 Thess. 2:9-10) he was resurrected in counterfeit imitation of Christ's true resurrection, *Ibid.*, fn. to Rev. 13:3.

6. Men will then worship Satan, the dragon who gave his power to the antichrist who is the beast personified in the Revived Roman Empire's leader, and they will worship the antichrist himself, saying, "Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" (Revelation 13:4)
 7. The antichrist will be given satanic power to speak enormous blasphemies against God, His tabernacle and the angels and believers who dwell in heaven, and to function in power for 42 months, or the last 3 1/2 years of the 7-year Great Tribulation [the 70th prophetic "week" of years in Daniel 9:27], Rev. 13:5-6.
 8. This evil ruler will also be granted power to make war with believers on the earth in the Great Tribulation and to defeat them in terms of human might, and to reign over all people groups on earth, Rev. 13:7.
 9. All whose names are not written in the book of eternal life of the Lamb, Christ, Who was slain from the foundation of the world, will worship the antichrist, Rev. 13:8. ***Thus, in the Great Tribulation era, every person on earth will FIRMLY DECIDE to trust EITHER in the ANTICHRIST OR in JESUS CHRIST!***
- B. Such oppressive evil will make life very hard for believers in Christ in the Great Tribulation era, but God will direct them, "If any man have an ear, let him hear," signaling an important prophetic message for their benefit that readers of the passage in the Great Tribulation must heed for blessing, Revelation 13:9.
- C. That message is Rev. 13:10 as follows: the oppressed must trust that (1) all who lead them into captivity will one day go into captivity in God's vengeance, and (2) all who kill them with the sword will one day be slain with the sword in God's vengeance; Ibid., Ryrie, ftn. to Rev. 13:10. (3) God will thus hold oppressed believers responsible to act in accord with this promise that in the "patience" (*hupomone*) and "faith" (*pistis*) of the saints, they might stay true to God's calling, U. B. S. Greek N. T., 1966, p. 868.
- D. For *our* benefit as **we also** face a **degree of godless oppression today**, we view this message in greater depth:
1. The KJV word "patience" translates *humpomone*, meaning to bear up under a great siege of trials with the courage of not losing heart, Richard C. Trench, Synonyms of the N. T., 1973, p. 197. (Revelation 13:10)
 2. What **produces** this **courageous fortitude** amid great trials is one's **trust** (*pistis*) in the Revelation 13:10 **promise** that **God will surely recompense persecutors whatever they do to afflict believers.**
 3. We note that Paul teaches this same truth for persecuted Christians in the Church era in 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10, more evidence that the Revelation 13:10 lesson is applicable in principle to believers today!
 4. We also note from 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12 in the same context that Paul gave this truth to urge believers to see that they **also** will **give an account to God**, that they **themselves** might **STAY FAITHFUL to Him!**
 5. What **further** should **motivate** the believer to heed God's promise is realizing that **compromise** (the Rev. 11:1-2 compromise with the temple court) **with evil where Satan fuels evil eventually leads to full evil** (II, A, 1-9 above), **so one CANNOT afford NOT to trust God and to stay faithful to His promises!**

Lesson: ***Even in the dreadfully oppressive days of the antichrist's last 3 1/2 year reign in the Great Tribulation, God will STILL call believers to bear up courageously under dire persecution by FOCUSING on His PROMISE that HE will RECOMPENSE ALL EVILS committed against them. Yet, this truth works both ways: believers must realize their OWN need to obey God without compromise and at all costs due to their OWN accountability to God, and we must also realize that any compromise eventually leads to all out rebellion against God and His discipline!***

Application: ***May we (1) trust in Christ to be saved, John 3:16. (2) May we then (a) bear up under oppressive evils leveled at us in the sure hope that God will justly recompense all wrongdoers for their evils. (b) However, may we realize that such accountability to God works both ways: He will deal with US according to OUR acts, so WE must heed Him without compromise, and (c) also recall that compromise only leads to total evil and God's discipline!***

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

The November 18, 2014 reading in the RBC Ministries "Our Daily Bread" devotional by Joe Stowell tells how the giant sequoia tree is created to withstand great trials in its lifetime. The tree is not only fire resistant, but forest fires are useful to the tree in splitting open its pine cones so its seeds can fall out into the ash on the forest floor and be fertilized and grow. Though sequoias can grow up to 300 feet tall with trunks 20 feet wide, they can thrive in only 3 feet of topsoil, for even if strong wind storms blow against their tall frames, or droughts or other such hardships come seemingly to threaten their survival, their roots intertwine with those of other sequoias to provide stability and joint assets of soil nutrients and moisture. They can thus live up to 3,000 years amid their many great trials of life.

God similarly wants us to withstand oppressive trials by trusting His nurturing, encouraging Bible promises.

May we trust in Christ to be saved. Then, may we withstand oppressive opposition to the truth by trusting God's promise to recompense every evil, unrepentant deed and every good deed by others or by us!