

The time of trouble forecasted in scripture will be the worst period in earth's history! In this coming crisis, Satan will compel all the world to worship him by imposing a false day of worship upon the inhabitants of the earth. As commandment-keepers resist Satan's supremacy, reject his false Sabbath and urge the world to worship the Creator, Satan will heat up the furnace of affliction and unleash his devilish fury. In that dreadful hour, God's people will feel the ire of the dragon. They will be tried, tested, hated, and hunted with satanic wrath. Thankfully, God will keep them during the hour of temptation. They will stand as true as steel and will be delivered at last. Let us study and discover What God Says About…"The Time of Trouble."

FORECAST OF THE FUTURE

1. **What happens when Michael stands up?**

   "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____, _____ _____ _____ _____ since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." *Daniel 12:1*

   Note: *The Bible forecasts indescribable trouble that will break forth upon the world in the last days. No human being can accurately depict this coming crisis. Surely, it will be worse than the most vivid human description. However, believers should obtain an experience with Christ now that will prepare them to stand for Him during that trying time.*

2. **How does Jesus describe the time of trouble that will be unlike any other time in the history of the world?**

   [21]"For _____ _____ _____ _____ _____, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. [22]And except those days should be shortened,

there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." *Matthew 24:21, 22*

RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

Note: *The book of Esther, like the book of Daniel, speaks to critical issues that God's people will face in the closing scenes of earth's history. During Queen Esther's time, the Jews in Persia faced a severe crisis when they were confronted with a death decree. The decree was due to Mordecai's refusal to obey the king's commandment that was in direct conflict with God's commandments. God's people will be confronted with similar issues in the last days. Just as Mordecai's refusal to obey the king's commandment excited Haman's wrath, Sabbath-keepers' refusal to worship the beast and his image in the last days will ignite the wrath of the dragon. Just as Haman cunningly worked to influence the king to enforce a law to exterminate the Jews, "religious powers" will also cunningly work to influence "political powers" to enforce a law intended to exterminate Sabbath-keepers. Just as God overthrew Haman's devilish plot and saved the Jews, God will overthrow the religious and political conspiracy of the last days and deliver His people in earth's final crisis.*

3. Who did King Ahasuerus promote above all the princes?

"After these things did king Ahasuerus promote _____ the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that were with him." *Esther 3:1*

4. Who refused to obey the king's commandment?

"And all the king's servants, that were in the king's gate, bowed, and reverenced Haman: for the king had so commanded concerning him. But _____ bowed not, nor did him reverence." *Esther 3:2*

Note: *The king's commandment to bow down and reverence Haman violated the first two commandments of God's moral law. Mordecai refused to put any god before the true and living God, and he also refused to bow down and reverence anyone other than His Creator. Mordecai's obedience to religious principle honored God, but it placed him in direct conflict with the king's commandment. Thankfully, Mordecai was more concerned about honoring God and obeying His commandments rather than seeking to secure his own personal security. God's people will be confronted with similar circumstances in the last days. We, like Mordecai, must maintain our allegiance to God regardless of the consequences.*

5. What question did the king's servants ask Mordecai?

"Then the king's servants, which were in the king's gate, said unto Mordecai, _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____?" *Esther 3:3*

6. How often did the king's servants question Mordecai?

"Now it came to pass, when _____ _____ _____ _____ _____, and he hearkened not unto them, that they told Haman, to see whether Mordecai's matters would stand: for he had told them that he was a Jew." *Esther 3:4*

7. How angry did Haman become when Mordecai refused to bow down and reverence him?

"And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman _____ _____ _____." *Esther 3:5*

Note: *Haman hated Mordecai because he refused to bow down and reverence him. He was determined not to let this Jew disrespect him and defy the explicit law of the king. Hence, Haman filled with pride would scheme and seek to annihilate all the Jews scattered throughout the Medo-Persian realm.*

8. Haman's wrath resulted in him seeking to massacre whom?

"And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had showed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought to destroy _____ _____ _____ that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even _____ _____ _____ _____." *Esther 3:6*

9. What three cunning statements did Haman make in order to convince the king to issue a decree to destroy all the Jews?

"And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____; _____ _____ _____ _____ _____: therefore it is _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ to _____ _____." *Esther 3:8*

Note: *Haman seized upon this opportunity to destroy Mordecai and the Jews by misleading the king with clever statements. He painted the Jews in a negative light before the king. He pointed out that the Jews' laws were different from everyone else's laws in the kingdom. Haman stated that the*

Jews were disloyal to the king because they were not keeping the king's laws, and that it's not in the king's best interest to allow the Jews to remain in his kingdom. Haman's rationale sounded good to the king, and Haman was therefore granted full authorization to do whatever he desired to do. Although Haman thought his deceptive scheme was working, God could read his purposes. God would eventually overthrow Haman's murderous plot, destroy him, and save the Jews! God will intervene on behalf of his people in the crisis at the end.

10. What was the overwhelming feeling of the Jews in the city of Shushan when they learned of the death decree?

"The posts went out, being hastened by the king's commandment, and the decree was given in Shushan the palace. And the king and Haman sat down to drink; but the city Shushan was _____." *Esther 3:15*

11. How did the Jews throughout the Persian realm react upon hearing the decree?

"And in every province, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, there was great _____ among the Jews, and _____, and _____, and _____; and many lay in _____ and _____." *Esther 4:3*

Note: *The Jews living throughout the Medo-Persian realm were in great distress when they learned of the death decree. It appeared as though death was certain and that all hope was lost for the Jews living in Persia. Thankfully, however, God would intervene and overthrow the plots of Haman. The conflict over false worship, brought about by the king's commandment in Esther's day, will be repeated in the last days. The next part of the study describes in detail how God's people will experience the same type of persecution through a union of church and state.*

THE ROMAN PAPACY OF THE DARK AGES

Note: *The Roman Papacy, symbolized as the first beast in Revelation 13:1-10, is identical to the little horn of Daniel 7 and is a composite of that beast. The first beast of Revelation 13 unquestionably points to the Roman Church of the Dark Ages that ruled the world for 1260 years from 538 A.D. to 1798 A.D. (Daniel 7:25; Revelation 12:6, 14; 13:5). In 538 A.D., the papacy received its "power, seat and great authority" from the pagan Roman Empire when the Bishop of Rome ascended to the throne with military protection. The Pope, a religious head, was now Caesars*

successor. This religio-political power—"a union of church and state"—persecuted all who refused to obey its dogmas. In 1798 A.D., the Papacy received a "deadly wound" when the French General Berthier marched into the Vatican, captured the Pope, put him into exile, and he died. This blow inflicted a "deadly wound" on the papacy, but it didn't destroy it. In the last days, the Papacy's deadly wound will be healed. It will re-emerge as the dominant religious power when the second beast of Revelation 13 makes an image of the beast—"a union of church and state"—and forces the world through legislation to worship the papacy and receive its mark.

12. What symbolic animal did John see rising from the sea?

[1]"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw _____ _____ rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. [2]And _____ _____ which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." *Revelation 13:1, 2*

Note: *The first beast of Revelation 13 is identical to the little horn power of Daniel 7. The descriptions given by Daniel and John the Revelator clearly identify this beast as the papacy of the Dark Ages.*

13. How many wonder after the beast?

"And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and _____ _____ _____ wondered after the beast." *Revelation 13:3*

14. What does the beast receive from virtually the whole world?

"And they _____ _____ _____ which gave power unto the beast: and they _____ _____ _____, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" *Revelation 13:4*

15. What did John predict would happen to the Papacy?

"He that leadeth into captivity _____ _____ _____ _____: he that killeth with the sword must be _____ _____ _____ _____. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints." *Revelation 13:10*

Note: *John predicted that the papacy would be captured and taken into exile. This occurred in 1798 A.D. The papacy killed millions with the sword and will eventually come to its end by suffering the sword of divine justice.*

Note: *The United States of America, symbolized as the second beast in Revelation 13:11-17, signed its Declaration of Independence in 1776 A.D. It was clearly rising into power and prominence in the year 1798 A.D. around the same time that the first beast, the papacy, received a "deadly wound" and was being taken into captivity. In contrast to the first beast that rose out of "the sea" or sea of people (Revelation 17:15), the United States, the second beast, rose out of a sparsely populated area—"the earth." The papacy rose among the old populated world of Europe, and America rose in the new sparsely populated world America. Without question, the second beast of Revelation 13 is the United States of America.*

16. What striking contradiction symbolizes a change that will occur in America?

"And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had _____ _____ like a _____, and he _____ as a _____." *Revelation 13:11*

Note: *The symbolism of this beast reveals that it professes Christianity. But, one day it will restrict religious liberty and persecute Sabbath-keepers.*

17. What will America compel the inhabitants of earth to do?

"And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to _____ _____ _____ _____, whose deadly wound was healed." *Revelation 13:12*

18. What counterfeit sign will deceive the masses?

"And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ on the earth in the sight of men." *Revelation 13:13*

Note: *According to John the Revelator, the second beast will cause fire to come down from heaven. In the days of Elijah, God sent fire from heaven to signal that He is the true and living God. In the last days, the second beast will seek to counterfeit this miracle and deceive the masses into believing that the mighty power of God is with him. This fire is a symbol of spiritualistic phenomenon that will assist the second beast in his work of deception. Therefore, counterfeit miracles will aid America in its baleful work of establishing a union of church and state in the last days.*

19. What does America instruct earth's inhabitants to make?

"And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make _____ _____ _____ _____ _____, which had the wound by a sword, and did live." *Revelation 13:14*

Note: *According to Bible prophecy, Protestant America will form an image to the Roman Papacy—a union of church and state. This will occur as a result of the apostate protestant churches throughout America emphasizing their similarities and uniting on common points of doctrine such as "Sunday sacredness" and a false concept of "the state of the dead." When this unholy union occurs, commandment-keepers will be targeted and persecuted as enemies of the government.*

20. To what does America have power to give life or breath? What is the penalty of refusing to worship the beast's image?

"And he had power to give life unto _____ _____ _____ _____ _____, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should _____ _____." *Revelation 13:15*

Note: *Nations "speak" through its legislation, and they also enforce their legislative actions. John the Revelator is saying that in the future America will breathe life into the image of the beast or the newly organized "church and state union." America will then enforce, by penalty of death, its religious decree to worship on Sunday, the first day of the week. All who worship God by keeping the seventh-day Sabbath, thereby refusing to keep Sunday, will have the government protection withdrawn from them. Apostate Protestantism in America will mimic the persecution leveled against Sabbath-keepers in Europe during the Dark Ages. Commandment-keepers' will be tried to the very core!*

21. What must people have in order to buy or sell in the last days?

[16]"And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to _____ _____ _____ in their _____ _____, or in their _____: [17]And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." *Revelation 13:16, 17*

Note: *America will institute and enforce the mark of the beast in the last days. All who refuse to worship on the first day of the week will be restricted from buying and selling and will be confronted with the death decree. However, God's people will maintain their allegiance to the true God and*

obey him just as Daniel and the three Hebrew Boys did when they were confronted with decrees that were contrary to the law of God. Indeed, God's people will continue to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience.

GOD WILL DELIVER HIS PEOPLE

22. According to Revelation 3:10, Jesus promises to guard His people during what terrible time in earth's history?

"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from _____ _____ _____ _____, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." *Revelation 3:10*

23. What assurance is given to those who remain faithful to God during the time of trouble?

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time _____ _____ _____ _____ _____, every one that shall be found written in the book." *Daniel 12:1*

SUMMARY

The time of trouble will be the worst period in earth's history. The final conflict will rage over the commandments of God and the commandments of men. This conflict will be over the true seventh-day Sabbath and the false Sunday Sabbath instituted by Rome. God's people will be confronted with similar circumstances as Mordecai and the Jews experienced during the days of Queen Esther. Their conscientious obedience to God's commandments will bring them in direct conflict with the laws of the government. Religious leaders will conspire like wicked Haman and influence political leaders to institute and enforce a Sunday Law, restricting religious liberty. God's people will be plunged into the time of trouble and will be tried to the very core. Just as God intervened and preserved the lives of His people scattered throughout Persia, during the time of trouble, He will intervene and deliver all whose names are found written in the Book of Life.

24. Dear friend, are you willing to obey God's commandments, including the seventh-day Sabbath? _____

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