

# THE GREAT TRIBULATION PROPHESED

**BIBLE TEXT** : Isaiah 24:1-23; 26:19-21; 34:1-8

LESSON 351 Senior Course

**MEMORY VERSE:** "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast" (Isaiah 26:20).

## **BIBLE TEXT in King James Version**

### **Isaiah 24:1-23**

<sup>1</sup> Behold, the LORD maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.

<sup>2</sup> And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him.

<sup>3</sup> The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the LORD hath spoken this word.

<sup>4</sup> The earth mourneth *and* fadeth away, the world languisheth *and* fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish.

<sup>5</sup> The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.

<sup>6</sup> Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.

<sup>7</sup> The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merryhearted do sigh.

<sup>8</sup> The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth.

<sup>9</sup> They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it.

<sup>10</sup> The city of confusion is broken down: every house is shut up, that

## **BIBLE REFERENCES:**

### **I God's Judgment upon the Land**

1. The Lord will reckon with the earth and its inhabitants, Isaiah 24:1, 3, 4; 26:21; 34:1-3;

#### **Isaiah 13:11**

<sup>11</sup> And I will punish the world for *their* evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.

#### **Matthew 24:21-22**

<sup>21</sup> For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

<sup>22</sup> And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

#### **2 Thessalonians 1:7-9**

<sup>7</sup> And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,

<sup>8</sup> In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

<sup>9</sup> Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

2. God's judgment will be without partiality, Isaiah 24:2; 34:2-5;

#### **John 12:48**

<sup>48</sup> He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

#### **Romans 2:8-9**

<sup>8</sup> But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,

<sup>9</sup> Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;

#### **Colossians 3:25**

<sup>25</sup> But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

#### **1 Peter 1:17**

<sup>17</sup> And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning *here* in fear:

3. The curse is pronounced upon the earth as the result of man's sins, Isaiah 24:5-12;

#### **Genesis 3:17**

<sup>17</sup> And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat *of* it all the days of thy life;

#### **Jeremiah 44:22**

<sup>22</sup> So that the LORD could no longer bear, because of the evil of your doings, *and* because of the abominations which ye have committed; therefore is your land a desolation, and an astonishment, and a curse, without an inhabitant, as at this day.

4. A remnant shall be spared and shall glorify God, but there shall be no escape for the wicked, Isaiah 24:16-18, 21, 22; 34:6-8;

no man may come in.

<sup>11</sup> *There is* a crying for wine in the streets; all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone.

<sup>12</sup> In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction.

<sup>13</sup> When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, *there shall be* as the shaking of an olive tree, *and* as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done.

<sup>14</sup> They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the LORD, they shall cry aloud from the sea.

<sup>15</sup> Wherefore glorify ye the LORD in the fires, *even* the name of the LORD God of Israel in the isles of the sea.

<sup>16</sup> From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, *even* glory to the righteous. But I said, My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me! the treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously.

<sup>17</sup> Fear, and the pit, and the snare, *are* upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth.

<sup>18</sup> And it shall come to pass, *that* he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake.

<sup>19</sup> The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly.

<sup>20</sup> The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again.

<sup>21</sup> And it shall come to pass in that

#### **Proverbs 11:21**

<sup>21</sup> *Though* hand *join* in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished: but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered.

#### **Proverbs 19:5**

<sup>5</sup> A false witness shall not be unpunished, and *he that* speaketh lies shall not escape.

#### **Amos 9:1-4**

<sup>1</sup> I saw the Lord standing upon the altar: and he said, Smite the lintel of the door, that the posts may shake: and cut them in the head, all of them; and I will slay the last of them with the sword: he that fleeth of them shall not flee away, and he that escapeth of them shall not be delivered.

<sup>2</sup> Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down:

<sup>3</sup> And though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence; and though they be hid from my sight in the bottom of the sea, thence will I command the serpent, and he shall bite them:

<sup>4</sup> And though they go into captivity before their enemies, thence will I command the sword, and it shall slay them: and I will set mine eyes upon them for evil, and not for good.

#### **Matthew 23:33**

<sup>33</sup> *Ye* serpents, *ye* generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

#### **Romans 2:3**

<sup>3</sup> And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

#### **Hebrews 2:3**

<sup>3</sup> How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*;

5. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunken man, Isaiah 24:19, 20;

#### **Isaiah 2:19**

<sup>19</sup> And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.

#### **Isaiah 13:13**

<sup>13</sup> Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.

#### **Revelation 11:19**

<sup>19</sup> And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail..

## **II Safety for the Righteous**

1. The righteous dead will be resurrected, and, with the righteous living, will be translated to Heaven before the tribulation, Isaiah 26:19, 20;

#### **1 Corinthians 15:19-22**

<sup>19</sup> If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

<sup>20</sup> But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the firstfruits of them that slept.

<sup>21</sup> For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead.

<sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

#### **1 Corinthians 15:51-54**

<sup>51</sup> Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

day, *that* the LORD shall punish the host of the high ones *that are* on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth.

<sup>22</sup> And they shall be gathered together, *as* prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited.

<sup>23</sup> Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.

### **Isaiah 26:19-21**

<sup>19</sup> Thy dead *men* shall live, *together with* my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew *is as* the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

<sup>20</sup> Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.

<sup>21</sup> For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

### **Isaiah 34:1-8**

<sup>1</sup> Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it.

<sup>2</sup> For the indignation of the LORD *is* upon all nations, and *his* fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter.

<sup>3</sup> Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcases, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood.

<sup>4</sup> And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens

<sup>52</sup> In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

<sup>53</sup> For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

<sup>54</sup> So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

### **1 Thessalonians 4:13-17**

<sup>13</sup> But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

<sup>14</sup> For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

<sup>15</sup> For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

<sup>16</sup> For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

<sup>17</sup> Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

### **Revelation 20:4**

<sup>4</sup> And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

2. The Lord of hosts will reign in Jerusalem at the close of the tribulation, Isaiah 24:23;

### **Isaiah 2:1-3**

<sup>1</sup> The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup> And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that* the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

<sup>3</sup> And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

### **Zechariah 14:9**

<sup>9</sup> And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.

### **Zechariah 14:16-17**

<sup>16</sup> And it shall come to pass, *that* every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.

<sup>17</sup> And it shall be, *that* whoso will not come up of *all* the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.

### **Revelation 11:15**

<sup>15</sup> And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

### **Revelation 19:11-16**

<sup>11</sup> And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

<sup>12</sup> His eyes *were* as a flame of fire, and on his head *were* many crowns; and he had a name written, that no

shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling *fig* from the fig tree.

<sup>5</sup> For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment.

<sup>6</sup> The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, *and* with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea.

<sup>7</sup> And the unicorns shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls; and their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness.

<sup>8</sup> For *it is* the day of the LORD'S vengeance, *and* the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion.

man knew, but he himself.

<sup>13</sup> And he *was* clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

<sup>14</sup> And the armies *which were* in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

<sup>15</sup> And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

<sup>16</sup> And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

#### **NOTES:**

"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. . . . then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matthew 24:14, 21). The Gospel of the Kingdom has been preached in the nations of the world, and people have largely rejected it; therefore the Great Tribulation will certainly follow in the course of events. Looking out over the world today, one can clearly see the evil influences of sin and the manifestations of the workings of Satan that are engulfing the human race. It seems that with the advancement of knowledge and learning there is less inclination toward righteousness and true godliness. The Bible says: "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (II Timothy 3:13).

#### **Coming Judgments**

The Lord gives solemn warning throughout His Word that sin and sinners will not go unpunished. The prophecy of Isaiah gives an indication as to how widespread this punishment will be in the day of the Lord's anger: "Behold, the LORD maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof" (Isaiah 24:1). No living man will be exempt from the judgments of God in that day. All people will suffer as the result of the sins that they committed. The people will suffer as well as the false prophets who taught them and gave them a false sense of security; the masters of the man who could with their money buy almost anything of earthly goods and happiness will suffer with the servants who laboured for them; the mistresses and their maidens, the buyers and the sellers, the borrowers and the lenders — all will find themselves confronted with God's anger and judgment because they refused the plan of salvation that God has made for the inhabitants of the world.

#### **Broken Covenant**

Isaiah, among the greatest of the Old Testament prophets, was pre-eminently a prophet of redemption; but he also spoke much of coming judgments upon specific countries and the world in general. The sentence of judgement pronounced in the 24th chapter seems to be directed to the whole world, and the main reasons for judgment are listed: "They have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant."

All sins of men are displeasing to God, but probably the most outrageous of men's sins is the rejection of Christ. From the very first sin that was committed against God, God promised that He would send a Redeemer to make atonement for man's sins. The everlasting covenant includes all men. Down through the years the promise was renewed and the reality came nearer, until God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world to suffer and die a sacrificial death on the Cross, that through Jesus' Blood all men might be saved. "God . . . now commandeth all men every where



to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:30, 31).

The only assurance of missing the terrors and sufferings of the Great Tribulation is obedience to the terms of the everlasting covenant — in other words, believe in Jesus Christ, repent of sins committed, and love and obey God with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength. Sad to say, mankind as a whole is not receiving or submitting to the provisions of the covenant. Because they receive not the love of the truth that they might be saved, the majority of the world's population is destined to perish.

### **Great Tribulation**

Sin takes a terrific toll in human life throughout the years; but the Great Tribulation will be a time of special judgment. There have been times of trouble before, but there has never been a time in the history of all the world that will compare with this time described in the Word of God. The Great Tribulation will be seven years in length. The latter part of that period is a time in which most terrible judgment will be poured out upon the inhabitants of the nations of the earth, Jew and Gentile alike, for their ungodliness and their rejection of the Gospel and the message of Christ. It will be a period of utmost misery, pain, and anguish, both physically and spiritually, to every living human being. Sin and wickedness will have their culmination in this awful catastrophe of judgment. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," the Word of God tells us, and the reaping time is coming just as surely as the sowing time.

The children of men are given to understand through the Word that it is no small thing to turn away from the Lord, and reap the consequences of sin. Some men try to plead ignorance of God and His Law, but God says "they willingly are ignorant" (II Peter 3:5). No excuse for sin will stand in this time of judgment, because ample provision has been made to remove sin from the human heart. Judgment is not an inspiring theme, perhaps, but it is a very necessary part of the Word of God, especially in view of the things that are threatening the world.

### **Antichrist**

"Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time" (Revelation 12:12). The devil had fought in Heaven and prevailed not, so on earth he will do his utmost to defeat the plan of God. As soon as the Church — the full overcoming Christians — is raptured out of the world, the devil will marshal the forces of men and set up his evil plan to rule the earth.

Jesus came as the incarnate Word, the Son of God manifest in the flesh; so the Antichrist comes as the devil incarnate, the very embodiment of the devil himself. The character of this Antichrist is set forth in the Bible in very plain terms. He is a man of lawlessness, one who has no regard for the laws of man or the Law of God. That is quite significant in these days, because we are living in lawless days. One of the things that has marked international relations of recent years has been the disregard for law or for treaties or for pledge word; all has been disregarded. There has been a total disregard for the Law of God, too, among certain nations. These are some of the signs that indicate the soon coming of this Antichrist.

He will be an oppressor, a tyrant beyond all other tyrants, over-towering them all. He attains his position by flatteries; but once the position is secure, he will bring about his goal by

### **QUESTIONS**

1. Why has God decreed that judgment will come upon the earth?
2. Who of the earth's inhabitants will be included in God's judgment?
3. What does the "everlasting covenant" mean to the world today?
4. How do men break the "everlasting covenant"?
5. When will the Great Tribulation come upon the earth?
6. What will happen to those who take the mark of the beast during the Tribulation?
6. Describe some of the terrible conditions that will exist in the earth throughout the Tribulation.
7. How is it possible to escape from the Great Tribulation?

compulsion. Daniel, in speaking of him, said that he will "honour the God of forces." In other words, he will honour militarism.

In these days when the world is rearming at a desperate rate and seeking to establish defences, militarism has become one of the leading factors in many nations. It has become the arm upon which nations are depending to bring about their ends; and coercion is one of the significant features of these military nations. They do not depend much upon diplomacy or arbitration. They are not trying to get together any longer upon a reasonable basis and meet their problems in a reasonable way; but they are determining to gain their ends by force -- a very strong characteristic of the Antichrist.

### **Mark of the Beast**

The life of Christ stands out above all other lives as the representative of God's righteousness to this world. The Antichrist, on the contrary, will come as a representative of iniquity. In fact, he will be a monster of iniquity, a hideous monster. He is represented in the Word of God as being a beast; and all who remain on earth during the reign of the Antichrist will be required to take the mark of the beast in their foreheads or in their right hands, or forfeit their lives. So rigid will be the requirement 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 13:17). Dire woe is pronounced upon those who receive the mark of the beast: "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name" (Revelation 14:9-11).

### **Way of Escape**

As we read the description in the Word of God of the reign of the Antichrist, and of the terrible conditions that will exist during the Great Tribulation, we can be thankful that God has provided a way by which we may escape that time. Jesus Christ is coming back to earth to catch away His waiting saints -- those of His children who have made the necessary preparation to meet Him. "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (I Thessalonians 4:16, 17).

God spared Noah when the earth was destroyed by water; He spared Lot in the time of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah; and he spared Israel when the death angel passed over Egypt. In like manner He has provided for His people a means of escape from the Tribulation. "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain" (Isaiah 26:20, 21). It is imperative that the children of men take advantage of the Gospel call today, for each succeeding day produces unmistakable signs that the day of Christ's coming is at hand.