

Biblical Womanhood

by

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THE LAST DAYS OF HISTORY (33)

The great tribulation. Contd

Two witnesses who preached the gospel and were killed will be resurrected (Rev 11:11-12)

End of great tribulation can be known by definite signs (Mt 24:15-29,32-33; Mk 13:28-29; Lk 21:28)

Will end with the battle of Armageddon and God's full wrath on the ungodly (Jer 25:29-38; Ezek 39:17-20; Joel 3:2,9-17; Zeph 3:8; Zech 14:2-5; Rev 14:9-11,14-20; 16:12-21; 19:17-18)

Christ will triumph over the antichrist and his armies (Mt 24:30-31; 2Pe 3:10-13; Rev 19:11-21)

(10x) THE AGE OF THE ANTICHRIST: an overview

"Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, showing himself that he is God." (2 Thes 2:3-4)

According to the Bible, at the end time, the spirit of antichrist (cf. 1 John 2:18; 4:3) will be embodied in an influential, international leader, one who will engineer Satan's final onslaught against Christ and the saints just before Christ establishes His kingdom on earth. Paul's terms for the antichrist are "the man of sin" and "the son of perdition" (2 Thes 2:3). Other terms used in the Bible are "another little horn, "that emerges from among ten horns (i.e. kings) (Dan 7:8, 11, 24-25), the "beast ris[ing] up out of the sea" (Rev 13:1-10), and just "the beast" (Rev 19:19-20; 20:10).

SIGNS OF THE ANTICHRIST'S COMING.

The coming of the antichrist will not be without warning several signs point to his coming and his appearance. At least three events must occur before he appears on earth: (1) the "mystery of iniquity" already at work in the world must intensify (2 Thes 2:7); (2) the "falling away" must come (2:3); (3) "he who now letteth will let" must be removed (2:7). The English word "let" meant "to hinder" or "restrain" rather than the common understanding of the word now as "allow."

(1) The "mystery of iniquity," that behind-the-scenes activity of evil powers evident throughout the world (see 2 Thes 2:7), will increase until it reaches its climax in the complete ridicule of and disregard for any standards and commands held sacred in the Bible. Because of a prevailing spirit of lawlessness, the love of many will grow cold (Mat 24:10-12; Luke 18:8). Yet a faithful remnant will remain loyal to the apostolic faith as revealed in the NT (Mat 24:13; 25:10; Luke 18:7; see Rev 2:7). Through these faithful people, the church will remain a warrior church, wielding the sword of the Spirit (see Eph 6:11).

(2) The "falling away" (Gk *apostasia*), literally meaning "departure," or "abandonment," will occur. In the last days, many within the professing church will depart from Biblical truth.

(a) Both Jesus and Paul paint a dismal picture morally, spiritually and doctrinally as the present age closes (cf. Mat 24:5, 10-1, 24; 1 Tim 4:3-4). Paul in particular stresses that the churches will be invaded by godless elements in the last days.

(b) This "falling away" within the church world will have two dimensions. (i) Theological apostasy is the departure from and rejection of a part or all of the original teachings of Christ and the apostles (1 Tim 4:1; 2 Tim 4:3). False leaders will offer "salvation" and cheap grace, while ignoring Christ's demand for repentance, separation from immorality, and loyalty to God and His standards (2 Pet 2:1-3, 12-19). False hope that centers on human activity and goals of self-interest will become popular (see 2 Tim 4:3-4).