

Place of Safety

There is a time coming, a time so bad unless God would put a stop to it mankind would *destroy* themselves completely! It's called *The Great Tribulation*, followed by *The Day of Lord*. Trouble as never was before on earth. Also called Jacob's trouble, hour of trial, the end of the world, etc. While these terrible things are happening all around the planet, where are God's *true* church members? What are they doing at that time? Let's look at some of what is to come in the word of God, the Bible. And what we should do.

Let's begin with what at first glance seems to be a peculiar insignificant bit of prophecy. And see how it fits the time coming.

Ezekiel 3:1 Moreover He said to me, "Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel."

First of all see that this is written to "the house of Israel." The descendants of Jacob, (renamed "Israel" by God Genesis 32:28.) These are comprised of 13 "tribes" (his family, descendants of his sons and grandsons now grown to become nations.) These can be shown to be the Jews (only ONE tribe, not even the biggest), and the modern day people from northern Europe, now spread out to the whole world.¹ These are the richest most prosperous people of *all time*, because *they* are the "chosen people" blessed by God. But with that blessing comes *responsibility*, which they have not upheld. Hence these events will befall them.

Ezekiel 5:1-2 "And you, son of man, take a sharp sword, take it as a barber's razor, and pass it over your head and your beard; then take scales to weigh and divide the hair. "You shall burn with fire one-third in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are finished; then

¹ See, "Who are the US and UK in Prophecy Today?" elsewhere on site.

you shall take one-third and strike around it with the sword, and one-third you shall scatter in the wind: I will draw out a sword after them.

The end time is very bad, and yet there is still hope for His people. Ezekiel's hair was to be cut. Cut and weighed *exactly*. Then: 1/3 burned, 1/3 hit with a sword, and 1/3 scattered in the wind. But God doesn't punish anybody without explaining *why*, and giving them the chance to change!

Verses 7-11 "Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Because you have multiplied disobedience more than the nations that are all around you, have not walked in My statutes nor kept My judgments, nor even done according to the judgments of the nations that are all around you' - "therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Indeed I, even I, am against you and will execute judgments in your midst in the sight of the nations. 'And I will do among you what I have never done, and the like of which I will never do again, because of all your abominations. 'Therefore fathers shall eat their sons in your midst, and sons shall eat their fathers; and I will execute judgments among you, and all of you who remain I will scatter to all the winds. 'Therefore, as I live,' says the Lord GOD, 'surely, because you have defiled My sanctuary with all your detestable things and with all your abominations, therefore I will also diminish you; My eye will not spare, nor will I have any pity.

The reason for all this terrible trouble? The nation of Israel, who was *supposed* to be the example nation that was blessed for doing what was right, did the *opposite*! Even *worse* than the other pagan nations around! (And the nations around were pretty *BAD*!) So now, since they have become a *bad* example, they will be an first-class example of what happens when you turn *away* from God, and His principles! (Upon which the law of the land used to be based.) This is exactly what the hair depicts.

Verses 12-13 'One-third of you shall die of the pestilence, and be consumed with famine in your midst; and one-third shall fall by the sword all around you; and I will scatter another third to all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them. 'Thus shall My anger be spent, and I will cause My fury to rest upon them, and I will be avenged; and they shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken it in My zeal, when I have spent My fury upon them.

This is the interpretation of the hair analogy. This symbolizes the physical descendants of Israel, all 13 tribes.

Verses 3-4 "You shall also take a small number of them and bind them in the edge of your garment. "Then take some of them again and throw them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire. From there a fire will go out into all the house of Israel.

A *few* hairs are tied up, and hidden in his garment. And from them some of them again would be put in the fire. This is a symbol of the spiritual Israel, *the church* in the end time. (Ancient Israel was the "church" of their time. Acts 7:38) A VERY few (Luke 12:32), the true people of God, will be protected (Malachi 3:16-17), some others thrown in the fire! Compare this to what is said in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 3:18 "I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.

Some of God's people will have to go through the refining fire. This will be the last, end time church. "Refined" in the fire, because they have problems and impurities that need to be driven out. In the Bible, fire equals trial (1 Peter 1:7). They hadn't developed Godly character, or removed sins during the time available leading up to this, as some others had (Revelation 3:10). These will be safe in the "hem," where His faithful will be kept from harm.

Where is this "place of safety?" This may be a physical place, or just spiritually close to God. God *can* protect His wherever they ARE. In any event, one group goes *through* the tribulation which has been caused by Satan. They either die in the faith or go on and are *protected* in the Day of Lord, which is God's final punishment.

To get a picture of this consider the story of Daniel and den of lions. His friends were not saved from being thrown *into* the furnace. They *were* thrown in furnace, but protected *there*. Rahab, didn't escape the city or it's destruction, but was saved alive in the city, with all her family, without a scratch. All these were protected *where they were*. But at end it doesn't look like it will be so. There are some scriptures that indicate this.

Zephaniah 2:1-3 Gather yourselves together, yes, gather together, O undesirable nation, Before the decree is issued, Or the day passes like chaff, Before the LORD'S fierce anger comes upon you, Before the day of the LORD'S anger comes upon you! Seek the LORD, all you meek of the earth, Who have upheld His justice. Seek righteousness, seek humility. It may be that you will be hidden in the day of the LORD'S anger.

"Zephaniah" means "Hidden of Ja [the Lord]" Context of the book is, the Day of Lord. He mentions it specifically *seven* times, more than any other book of the Bible! This world views God's people as "undesirables." That's what they thought of Christ, and the apostles. Wreckers of their immoral degenerate society! (Acts 17:6)

So, what are the requirements to be safe in this place prepared? (Revelation 12:6) Someone who is: a.) seeking the Lord, b.) unassuming demeanor, c.) upholds justice, d.) seeks righteousness, and e.) seeks humility. That kind of person has a *possibility* of being hidden. Verse 3 from a different version:

Zephaniah 2:3 Seek Yahweh [the LORD], all you humble of the land, Who have executed His ordinance; Seek righteousness, seek humility. Perhaps you shall be concealed in the day of Yahweh's anger. (CLV)

Psalms 31:19-20 Oh, how great is Your goodness, Which You have laid up for those who fear [revere] You, Which You have prepared for those who trust in You In the presence of the sons of men! You shall hide them in the secret place of Your presence From the plots of man; You shall keep them secretly in a pavilion [a quick rough shelter made of available materials]. From the strife of tongues.

David was a prophet! Fear and trust God. Hidden in secret place from plots of men. "Pavilion" is the word Succoth (Leviticus 23:42-43) Booths or tabernacles, as the Feast of Tabernacles. By definition, a hut (as of entwined boughs.) In our time it would be something like a wickiup, or wigwam. Not four star hotel! Israel lived in these when they were brought out of Egypt to "refuge" in God, symbolized by life in booths.

Isaiah 10:5 "Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger And the staff in whose hand is My indignation.

God uses other nations (Assyria) to punish Israel. This is probably modern Germany, though we don't know for sure.

Isaiah 10:24-25 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD of hosts: "O My people, who dwell in Zion, do not be afraid of the Assyrian. He shall strike you with a rod and lift up His staff against you, in the manner of Egypt. "For yet a very little while and the indignation will cease, as will My anger in their destruction."

Because God is indignant with their behavior, just as a parent with a overtly disobedient adolescent son or daughter. They should *know* better!

Isaiah 26:20-21 Come, my people, enter your chambers, And shut your doors behind you; Hide yourself, as it were, for a little moment, Until the indignation is past. For behold, the LORD comes out of His place To punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; The earth will also disclose her blood, And will no more cover her slain.

"Chambers" a small place of protection, don't worry about Assyria. Remaining hidden there until the Day of the Lord is past. All earth will be punished. This is not done in cruelty, but done so they will turn around, and follow the better way. So they will stop doing terrible things.

Revelation 12:14-17 But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. So the serpent spewed water out of His mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of His mouth. And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony [evidence given] of Jesus Christ.

It will be on EARTH, no rapture off to heaven. Wilderness? Her place? What do these mean? A woman equates with the church, here it's God's people (2 Corinthians 11:2), his called out ones (ekklesia.) Three and one half years equals the tribulation and the Day of the Lord. (Psalms 17:8) Wings are a symbol, but of what? (In Exodus 19:4 they walked!) Of being under Divine protection. Wings show *protection*, not transport. Flood after the woman (church) as she flees to this safe place. Floods are analogies of *armies* or peoples. Whatever they are, they are *after* the people of God! The EARTH opens. (So they can't have been raptured to heaven.) Would this be similar to Korah, where the earth opened and swallowed them? (Numbers 16:32) Or the Red Sea like? (Exodus 15:10) Some church members will remain behind. The hairs thrown into the fire. So WHERE is this place in the wilderness? We only get hints, and inklings! Here are a few.

Isaiah 16:1-4 Send the lamb to the ruler of the land, From Sela [to be lofty; a craggy rock] to the wilderness, To the mount of the daughter of Zion. For it shall be as a wandering bird thrown out of the nest; So shall be the daughters of Moab at the fords of the Arnon [loud stream]. "Take counsel, execute judgment; Make your shadow like the night in the middle of the day; Hide the outcasts, Do not betray him who escapes. Let My outcasts dwell with you, O Moab; Be a shelter to them from the face of the spoiler. For the extortioner is at an end, Devastation ceases, The oppressors are consumed out of the land.

Outcasts? Moab? Sela? A shelter? Escape? Perhaps these are clues? There are further indications.

Isaiah 42:10-11 Sing to the LORD a new song, And His praise from the ends of the earth, You who go down to the sea, and all that is in it, You coastlands and you inhabitants of them! Let the wilderness [i.e. open country, rangeland] and its cities lift up their voice, The villages that Kedar [dusky skin, or dark tent color] inhabits. Let the inhabitants of Sela [to be lofty; a craggy rock] sing, Let them shout from the top of the mountains.

Leaving most behind, they must escape. Could this "new song" be the one that the one hundred and forty four thousand sing? (Revelation 14:1-5) Kedar? (Qedar, the second son of Ishmael, who historically lived in an area southeast of Damascus and east of the Transjordan. Genesis 25:13) Sela (the

craggy rock)? People apparently live there, as it says "the *inhabitants* of Sela." Who sings from the rock. This may be at least part of the one hundred and forty four thousand, which is where they would seem to be at this time. (Historically its population only peaked at an estimated 20,000 inhabitants. More than that might be a tight squeeze!) Some have said: *Petra* is in Moab and it's "rock!" And full of "chambers" (caves.) So, that's proof? They say it's easy to hide there and defend. Armies "can't" get in. Oh, *really*? This is the 21st century, what about parachutes? Bunker-buster bombs? Why not just GAS or NUKE it? No, we are protected by *God*, He doesn't need slot canyons. *Petra* isn't a nice place. But if that's it, it's better than the alternative!

Psalms 27:5 For in the time of trouble He shall hide [to hide by covering over] me in His pavilion [wigwam]; In the secret [a cover] place of His tabernacle [a tent, clearly *conspicuous* from a distance] He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock [a cliff or sharp rock].

Cliffs are high, at the *top*? Pavilion? Hide? Yet, "*high* upon a rock?" Not at the *bottom* of a slot canyon in a *cave*! How can it be a cover to hide and conspicuous at the same time? And it elsewhere talks about seeing distant things from there - where ever it is. No matter, God will bring us to the place, where ever it is!

Matthew 24:33-42 "So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near--at the doors! "Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. "But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. "For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, "and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. "Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. "Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. "Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.

Don't let yourself be SURPRISED! We can't know the exact time, but it doesn't mean we can't know it is imminent. Watch and pray to *be counted* worthy to escape. (Luke 21:36) And who will that be?

Revelation 12:11 "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

The context is the escape of the woman (verse 6.) Who will go to the place of safety? Those willing to lay down their lives *before* these things begin to happen. And how do they do that?

Romans 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect [complete] will of God.

We are to be living sacrifices NOW! Transformed from being just like everyone else (conformed to this world,) to knowing, proving, and following the entire will of God. A life of *faith*, with *evidence*. (i.e. Works!) How do you go about this?

Romans 6:13 And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

Romans 6:16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?

Basically, "Do this, not that." The church of the Laodicians was not willing, in good times, to make the sacrifice and change. They thought they had plenty of time. They say, "Why all this urgency?" (Romans 13:11-12) So they, like the pinch of hair, are thrown into the fire. They will *gain* a sense of urgency then. That's not how we want to get it! We are to have given our body and mind to God, and be getting rid of our SELF-will *now*.

Galatians 2:20 "I have been crucified [impaled] with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

We are no longer conformed to the world, it's ways, it's thinking, it's practices. We are God's temple, where His Holy Spirit resides. (Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 6:14-17) We must be continually transforming ourselves, our actions, our life. Trying to overcome our human nature. Why? Because those that do, those that persevere and overcome, will have a great reward.

Revelation 3:7-12 "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, 'These things says He who is holy, He who is true, "He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens": "I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. "Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie--indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. "Because you have kept My command to persevere [cheerful or hopeful endurance, constancy], I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. "Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast [to use strength, i.e. seize or retain] what you have, that no one may take your crown. "He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. And I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.

Do you see the sense of *urgency* in these very words of Christ? "*I am coming quickly!*" Those who *heed* will be kept "from the hour of trial." The actions that accomplish this? Those who keep His word, not denied His name, keep the command to persevere, hold fast, and overcome. Laodocia, the "lukewarm" group, does not see the necessity to work on doing these things. They think they are just fine! The lesson? There are qualifications, requirements. Not everyone is progressing to the point they "merit" the

place of safety. Some need that extra "incentive" of the tribulation to attain their full potential, and receive the great reward God wants for them. Even so, some of the righteous may be martyred. It is God's call. God has a high position for each of us He has called at this time. A high position which requires great sacrifice to attain. IF you do get to the place of safety, don't let down. Also, it's possible we can help others. Consider that in Rahab's case, "all who are with her in the house," were saved along with her. (Joshua 6:17) She risked her life hiding the spies. This is a principle!

Luke 17:33 "Whoever seeks to save His life will lose it, and whoever loses His life will preserve it.

So you "go along with the flow" because want to be safe? To avoid conflict? Then you *won't* be safe! We must be living sacrifices, doing whatever it takes. Not finding the middle ground to save our skin. Where is your focus? Do you stand up for God's unmovable truth? Or do you respect and value everyone's viewpoint and believe in the unity of all people? (Then why don't you join the Bahá'í Faith? Because *that* is their *creed!*) There is only ONE way, ONE true religion, and ONE God that can save us, physically and spiritually. Other viewpoints and ideas are invalid.

Psalms 91:1-4 He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge [a shelter] and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust." Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler And from the perilous pestilence. He shall cover you with His feathers, And under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler.

How does this apply to you? The analogy of "wings of protection" is used. Like a bird covering it's nest with it's wings to shield it's young from predators that would snatch them away. Israel couldn't save themselves, they had to put blood on the door, and leave in haste. (Exodus 12:7-51) That's all they *could* do, God did the rest.

Verses 5-16 You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, Nor of the arrow that flies by day, Nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, Nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday. A thousand may fall at your side, And ten thousand at your right hand; But it shall not

come near you. Only with your eyes shall you look, And see the reward of the wicked. Because you have made the LORD, who is my refuge, Even the Most High, your dwelling place, No evil shall befall you, Nor shall any plague come near your dwelling; For He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways. In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone. You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra, The young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot. "Because he has set His love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high, because he has known My name. He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him, And show him My salvation."

"long life" can mean "*forever living!*"

1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

God provides a way of escape (an outlet, safety). God will work out your eternal life if you do your part. Stay the course, receive the great reward.

Revelation 22:12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward [pay for service] is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.