

THE SEVENTIETH WEEK OF DANIEL, THE GREAT TRIBULATION TIME OF JACOB'S TROUBLE ARE NOT THE SAME!

THE BIBLE has a great deal to say about suffering, trials, persecution and other related subjects. But it also shows that, for the righteous, these work out for their good and for the perfecting of their character; while for the wicked, they come as punishment and correction. There are scores of Scripture passages telling of the good which suffering accrues to believers. Although it is always natural and human to shrink from suffering and to avoid it as much as possible, the Scriptures assure us that it is the common lot of men under the present order of things.

When one's attention is turned to the study of prophecy, it is immediately evident that the prophets have much to say about the suffering which is to come upon the peoples of this earth. Furthermore, three outstanding passages of Scripture tell of periods of suffering to take place. The Scriptures also have much to say concerning the right interpretation to be placed upon them. Nearly seventy times the words "interpret" or "interpretation" are found in the Bible, thus indicating that the Scriptures must be interpreted correctly. Paul urged young Timothy to "*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing*

the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15). We are told also in *Philippians* 1:10 (Margin) to "try (or test) things that differ."

Let us then state the truth concerning "The Seventy Weeks of Daniel," "The Great Tribulation," and "The Time of Jacob's Trouble." Futurism equates these three periods as the same, contemporary and yet future. This is one of the great errors of futurism.

Frequently and consistently down through the years, we have called attention to the basic errors of futurism; but these errors are more evident today in the thinking of people than in the past, so we must continue to expose them. However, we have no desire merely to expose an error, but rather to put men in possession of the truth. Since error is created by men and comes as a result of his limited knowledge, you may naturally expect to see it contradict well-established truths. But truth is eternal because it comes from God; so when we get the truth, or all the facts in any particular case, we will find harmony.

The reason the futurist, in his interpretation of prophecy, has made these three periods of tribulation and trouble to be the same (and consequently uses the terms interchangeably) is occasioned by

failing to note who was speaking, who was being addressed, when the trouble was to come and how long it was to last. This has created in the Christian world a false expectancy, which we must try to expose.

In *Daniel* 9:20-27 is found one of the great time cycles of the Bible, commonly called the "Seventy Weeks." A week is a period of seven days, and 70 times that would be 490 days. But we know that what was to take place in that allotted period never happened, so we must apply the "day for a year" principle here (*Ezekiel* 4:6 and *Numbers* 14:34). Thus we have a time period of 490 years, which does meet the requirements.

This was a charter of 490 years given to a remnant of the Jewish nation which returned from the Babylonian captivity to restore Jerusalem and the temple worship, and thus set the stage for the first advent of Jesus Christ. This was done as God's Sanctuary (*Psalms* 114:1-2), a term applied only to Judah. Israel, God's dominion, had no part in this, but was to set the stage for the second advent of Jesus Christ by her world-wide dominion. The ten tribes of Israel had gone to Assyria more than a century before Judah went to Babylon, and never did return to Palestine.

This charter of 490 years was to

end with a period of terrible suffering. It was also to run consecutively and was fulfilled to the letter, coming to an end in the days of the apostles at the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. It was a most severe period of suffering, the intensity of which will never be experienced again. Christ also alluded to this in *Matthew* 24:15-22. This does not refer to tribulation at the end of this age. It is certain that tribulation is coming, but that spoken of by Daniel in his ninth chapter is all past history.

The apostle John wrote of "Great Tribulation" (*Revelation* 7:14), which has lasted throughout the whole of the Christian era with a period of 1260 years (day for a year scale) being the worst. It is folly to try, as the futurists do, to crowd into 3½ or even 7 years a time of trouble as shown in the book of *Revelation*. This period of suffering applies primarily to the Church. It is unique, too, in that it was to be the longest period of suffering. It would tax the ingenuity of man to imagine all that Christians have gone through for their faith. Christ told His disciples that they were to have tribulation in the world (*John* 16:23).

The apostle Paul, also, taught that we must through much tribulation enter the kingdom (*Acts* 14:22). This prophetic epoch began