

HANDOUT – Lesson 215 – EARLY TRIBULATION: THE FIRST 3 ½ YEARS

HAPPENING IN HEAVEN (SPIRITUAL REALITY)	HAPPENING ON EARTH (PHYSICAL REALITY)
1. Satan (the dragon) pursues Israel (the woman), but she is given refuge for 3½ years. Satan tries to drown her but the earth saves her. So Satan goes off to make war on the rest of the woman's offspring (the saints). <i>Rev 12:13-17</i>	Somehow, Israel is protected (perhaps by the other nations?), but the Christian world (the saints) are left vulnerable.
2. Satan calls forth the AntiChrist (the beast, Satan's "seed" as per Genesis 3) from the sea (the world/Gentile nations). The AntiChrist has seven heads and ten horns, just like Satan. Satan gives his power, throne and authority to the AntiChrist. Satan has diadems on his seven heads, but the beast's diadems rest on his ten horns (ten kings/kingdoms). <i>Rev 13:1</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The AntiChrist begins his rise to power, but as of yet is not dominant. The world government rests on ten "kings". The AntiChrist is completely wicked and a master of intrigue, gifted with the power of Satan. <i>Dan 8:23-24</i> He is apparently a Gentile, from somewhere within the old Roman Empire, since <i>Dan 9:26</i> says that he comes from the people who destroy Jerusalem and the Temple, a prophecy fulfilled in AD 70 by the Romans. Specifically, we know from <i>Dan 8:9</i>, that he comes from one of the four regions of the Greek Empire (Egypt/Palestine, Syria, Greece/Macedonia, Asia Minor). The many references to him as a king of the North in the context of <i>Dan 11</i>, imply he is from Syria.
3. The beast looks like a leopard, but has feet like a bear and a mouth like a lion. <i>Rev 13:2</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The AntiChrist's kingdom will apparently cover the ancient kingdom of Greece (the leopard in <i>Dan 7</i>) which stretched from Libya & Egypt, around the Mediterranean to Greece and eastward to the border of India. The capital apparently will be in Babylon (the lion in <i>Dan 7</i>) which is just outside the modern city of Baghdad. His government will apparently be funded by the riches of Persia (the bear in <i>Dan 7</i>). If the time is soon, this would imply control of the petroleum riches of that entire region.
4. First "Harvest" – a sickle is swung and the earth is harvested. <i>Rev 14:14-16</i> Timing isn't specific. This is the first of two harvests. It is possible that the two harvests are brackets that begin and end the Great Tribulation. We are placing the first harvest as a marker of the beginning of the first half of the tribulation, and the second harvest as a marker of the beginning of the second half of the tribulation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The AntiChrist (the ruler who is to come), will confirm a "covenant with the many" for one 'seven' (the 70th seven, the last seven years before the coming of Christ) The signing of the covenant marks the beginning of the tribulation. <i>Dan 9:27</i> When the AntiChrist arises he is not initially a king, but perhaps as a power broker on behalf of one of the ten kings (a prince of the covenant as per <i>Dan 11:22?</i>). Several prophecies in Daniel describe him as a little horn that grows into a big one.
5. The AntiChrist crushes three of the ten horns (ten rulers who exist at the time of his rising). <i>Dan 7:24</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The AntiChrist seizes power using intrigue and deception after the "covenant with the many" is signed. <i>Dan 11:21,23</i> The AntiChrist begins military campaigns – especially against Egypt, to his south. Israel sides with Egypt and Assyria (modern day Iraq/Iran) in defiance of the AntiChrist. <i>Dan 11:21-31, Isa 19:1-25</i> The AntiChrist utterly dominates three of the ten world kingdoms. This includes Egypt and presumably Assyria, since he makes his capital in Babylon. The timing of this is not specified. It certainly begins with his rise to

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	power at the beginning of the Tribulation and may not culminate until the end of the first 3½ years.
6. Four angels who have power to harm the land and the sea are holding back the winds. They are told not to harm the land and the sea until a seal is placed on the foreheads of the 144,000 servants of God – 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes of Israel. Rev 7:1-8	All living servants of God are sealed on the forehead, presumably as protection from the wrath to come. Revelation never says when these angels release the winds to destroy the land and the sea. The winds may be symbolic (probably, since this is by far the most common meaning for wind in Scripture) or they may be a literal means of destruction used during the various judgments (seals, trumpets and bowls).
7. An angel is sent to proclaim the gospel to those who live on earth. Rev 14:6,7	Two witnesses (men) are sent to prophesy for 3½ years. They wear mourning clothes and have the power to stop rain, to turn water to blood and to strike the earth with plagues. They kill their enemies (literally) with fire from their mouths. Rev 11:4-6, Zec 3 and 4