

Great Controversy Series
Prayer Wrestling & Time of Trouble
Chapter 39 - The Time of Trouble
 Bible Sermon Study Notes: Cary Rodgers, Jr., pastor

What is the “time of trouble”?

“Time” is referring to a specific season or period of trouble.

“Trouble” (Hebrew) tsârâh (tsaw-raw') **tightness** (that is, figuratively trouble); transitively a **female rival**: - **adversary, adversity, affliction, anguish, distress, tribulation.**

What is this “female rival” that will bring about adversity, affliction, anguish, distress, and tribulation?

Genesis 3:15

15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Remember, a “woman” in the Bible generally represents God’s church. An adulterous woman represents Satan’s counterfeit church. This is the female rivalry: God’s true church vs. Satan’s Counterfeit. As time comes closer to the end, the rivalry between God’s people and the deceived people of Satan will intensify into a period or time of trouble that this world has never seen.

True can never mix or unite with Lie. Truth hates Lie and Lie hates Truth! Truth gives an invitation to Lie to repent turn to Jesus and stop lying and be converted to the truth. If Lie rejects the Truth, he wants to kill the Truth. Truth has a love for the truth and a passion to give the TRUTH throughout the world, but Lie want to stop it! This is the female rivalry. This is the Great Controversy!

When will the “time of trouble” begin?

First let’s go to the golden image that the king of Babylon built in Daniel 3.

What governmental decree did king Nebuchadnezzar make?

Daniel 3:4-6

4 Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages,
 5 That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up:
 6 And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

This is an example of a governmental law that demands worship of a false image and those who do not abide by the law will suffer great consequences! Only a faithful few, 3 Hebrew youth, refused to bow down.

What is prophesied about forced worship to a false image?

Revelation 13:3-4, 11, 12,15-17

3 And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast [Papal Rome].

4 And they worshipped the dragon [Satan] which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

11 And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb [USA], and he spake as a dragon.

12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast [apostate protestants], that the image of the beast should both speak [legislate], and cause [force] that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

16 And he causeth [force] all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

17 And 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.

This is the description of the mark of the beast crisis, the Sunday law, that will bring about the “time of trouble.” Forced worship to a false image!

Remember, what unifies the beast with the image of the beast? Spiritualism and Sunday sacredness

“Through the two great errors, the immortality of the soul (spiritualism) and Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions. While the former lays the foundation of spiritualism, the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome. The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience.” GC 588

The mark of the beast crisis comes about when the false sabbath, Sunday, is made law. This will be the official beginning of the time of trouble. The time of trouble will intensify and end with the GREAT time of trouble, the seven last plagues!

Who will able to STAND?

Revelation 6:17

17 For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

Revelation 7:1-3

1 And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

2 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

Only those sealed with the seal of the living God will be able to STAND! They have the character of God in their foreheads who have won the victory over sin through by daily abiding in Christ!

Are you ready to stand? Are you prepared and ready? The time of trouble is right upon us!

“Time of Trouble” summary of events:

Time of Trouble - Cat 1... Cat 2.... Cat 3.... Cat 4.... Cat 5 Great Time of Trouble: Seven Last Plagues!

Sunday Law

- 1) Mark of the Beast Crisis
- 2) Remnant faithful – Loud Cry Final Message
“Get out of Babylon!”
- 3) Remnant will suffer persecution, torture, imprisonment, and death.
- 4) Only those with MOB can buy or sell
- 5) Nature disasters increase
- 6) Violent calamities increase
- 7) Economic collapse
- 8) False Loud Cry – Babylon (three frogs)
- 9) Wonders and miracles – Babylon
- 10) False Christs

Death Decree

- 1) Probation closes for ALL people
- 2) Remnant will flee to mountains and solidarity places
- 3) Remnant will not be killed
- 4) 1 year (Revelation 18:8)

During the time of trouble what will Satan and his evils demons do to sweep the world under His great deception?

“Fearful sights of a supernatural character will soon be revealed in the heavens, in token of the power of miracle-working demons. The spirits of devils will go forth to the kings of the earth and to the whole world, to fasten them in deception, and urge them on to unite with Satan in his last struggle against the government of heaven. By these agencies, rulers and subjects will be alike deceived. Persons will arise pretending to be Christ Himself, and claiming the title and worship which belong to the world's Redeemer. They will perform wonderful miracles of healing and will profess to have revelations from heaven contradicting the testimony of the Scriptures.” GC 624

“As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ. The church has long professed to look to the Saviour's advent as the consummation of her hopes. Now the great deceiver will make it appear that Christ has come. In different parts of the earth, Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in the Revelation. Revelation 1:13-15.” GC 624

“His voice is soft and subdued, yet full of melody. In gentle, compassionate tones he presents some of the same gracious, heavenly truths which the Saviour uttered; he heals the diseases of the people, and then, in his assumed character of Christ, he claims to have changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and commands all to hallow the day which he has blessed. He declares that those who persist in keeping holy the seventh day are blaspheming his name by refusing to listen to his angels sent to them with light and truth. This is the strong, almost overmastering delusion.” GC 624

Will God’s true faithful remnant be fooled by Satan impersonation of Jesus? NO! They know about what the Bible says about the second coming of Jesus!

Satan will not be permitted to counterfeit the second coming of Jesus in which “every eye” will see coming from the clouds of heaven with a shout.

What was Jesus warnings about these false christs?

Matthew 24:24-26

24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

25 Behold, I have told you before.

26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.

God's remnant must be bold like Jeremiah and give the Loud Cry message in the midst of great opposition!

What happened to Jeremiah? Who opposed him the most? Let's look at an example.

Jeremiah 19:14-15

14 Then came Jeremiah from Tophet, whither the LORD had sent him to prophesy; and he stood in the court of the LORD'S house; and said to all the people,

15 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring upon this city and upon all her towns all the evil that I have pronounced against it, because they have hardened their necks, that they might not hear my words. **(Continues to chapter 20)**

Jeremiah 20:1-2

1 Now Pashur the son of Immer the priest, who was also chief governor in the house of the LORD, heard that Jeremiah prophesied these things.

2 Then Pashur smote Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks that were in the high gate of Benjamin, which was by the house of the LORD.

Was Jeremiah applauded and embraced by the priests of the church? NO! Pashur, a priest, son of the chief governor of the church put Jeremiah in the stocks! Pashur wanted to stop the TRUTH!

What was God's response to Pashur?

Jeremiah 20:3-4

3 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Pashur brought forth Jeremiah out of the stocks. Then said Jeremiah unto him, The LORD hath not called thy name **Pashur, but Magormissabib.**

4 For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will make thee a terror to thyself, and to all thy friends: and they shall fall by the sword of their enemies, and thine eyes shall behold it: and I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall carry them captive into Babylon, and shall slay them with the sword.

Why does the Lord not call Pashur, Pashur, but Magormissabib?

Pashur (Hebrew) = "Freedom"

Magormissabib (Hebrew) = "Terror on every side"

God exposed the true character and fate of Pashur. He revealed that Pashur was not about freedom but terrorist to Jeremiah who was inviting God's people to true freedom through obedience to God! Has a result of Pashur's rejection of truth, he and his family will suffer from "terror on every side"

Pashur to Magormissabib = Beasts of Revelation 13

Pashur to Magormissabib is a parallel to the beast powers of Revelation 13:

Beast = Papal Rome
 Image to the Beast = Apostate Church
 Lamb like beast with two horns = USA

Papal Rome pretends that is for religious freedom. The image of the beast and the lamb like beast who have united themselves to Papal Rome will also push "religious freedom." Sunday laws are proposed to bring about a revival and increase morality. It is pushed as a solution for "climate change" and poverty. Sundays are promoted to bring about peace and liberty. Sunday laws will not be seen as a violation of religious freedom.

God reveals in Revelation 13, they are lying. The beasts of Revelation 13 (Babylon) are like Pashur who is in reality Magormissabib, "terror on every side" to God's true remnant. In the end the all the beasts and those who receive the mark of the beast who where a "terror on every side" to the remnant of God will receive the "terror on every side", the wrath of God and be destroyed in the end!

What will come upon this world after the final test is complete? Who passed the test?

Daniel 12:1

1 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a **time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time**: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, **every one that shall be found written in the book**.

"Time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation" are the SEVEN LAST PLAGUES!

"When the third angel's message closes, mercy no longer pleads for the guilty inhabitants of the earth. The people of God have accomplished their work. They have received "the latter rain," "the refreshing from the presence of the Lord," and they are prepared for the trying hour before them. Angels are hastening to and fro in heaven. An angel returning from the earth announces that his work is done; the final test has been brought upon the world, and all who have proved themselves loyal to the divine precepts have received "the seal of the living God." Then Jesus ceases His intercession in the sanctuary above. He lifts His hands and with a loud voice says, "It is done;" and all the angelic host lay off their crowns as He makes the solemn announcement: GC 613

Revelation 22:11, 12

11 He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

After this what does Jesus say?

12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

After Jesus as our high priest in the Most Holy Place says it is done, He stands up for His faithful remnant and says the time has come! He exchanges is High priestly garments to His kingly attire. What else does He do?

Revelation 8:2-6

2 And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.

3 And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

4 And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.

5 And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

6 And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

When Jesus throws down the censer it is done! After that seven last plagues are blown upon this earth!

“The nations are now getting angry, but when our High Priest has finished His work in the sanctuary, He will stand up, put on the garments of vengeance, and then the seven last plagues will be poured out. I saw that the four angels would hold the four winds until Jesus' work was done in the sanctuary, and then will come the seven last plagues.” {Early Writings, Ellen White p. 36.}

Seven last plagues are described in Revelation 16, but they parallel with the seven trumpets in Revelation 8 after Jesus throws down the golden censer!

What does John call the events of the seven trumpets? He names it after the six trumpet blows in Revelation 9:20. Let's not guess. Let the Bible speak for itself.

Revelation 9:20 And the rest of the men which were not killed by these **plagues** yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk.

The seven trumpets are what? Plagues. The seven trumpets are the same event of the seven last plagues. Remember the Revelation is divided into two books the first half Revelation 1-11 and the second half Revelation 12 – 22. When you compare both halves of the book there are occasions when each half covers the same event. Both halves of Revelation cover specific last day events of things that will happen before and during the second coming of Jesus, such as the seven last plagues. We will see that the seven trumpets of Revelation 8 and the seven last plagues of Revelation compliment each other. When you line them up together, they reveal a complete picture.

For instance, the seven vials - last plagues gives us information of WHAT happens, but the same plagues described after the seven trumpets blow gives us details like WHEN, WHERE, WHY, and HOW. These trumpets also explain the CAUSE and EFFECT of the plagues.

Do you think these plague are literal or symbolic?

The plagues described in Revelation 8 and in Revelation 16 are LITERAL events. These plagues are NOT symbolic. The entire context of Revelation 8 and 16 is literal. There are not images of beast or dragon.

Where the plagues that God sent to Pharaoh and the Egyptians symbol or literal when they refused to release the Israelites from slavery? Literal. The same is true with the last day plagues described in the vision of the seven trumpets and the seven last plagues. They are literal events. Now you may find that John in his description of some of the plagues uses names or titles, and similes or comparisons. It will give comparisons, like a lion or scorpion, but not symbolism.

Seven Trumpets of BATTLE NOT WARNING

In the old testament the Israelites used trumpets for various purposes. They blew trumpets as warnings of coming judgments, a call to worship, or signals of battle. Now, keeping that in mind let me ask you this question.

When are the seven trumpets that we are about study in Revelation chapter 8:6 going to blow?

After Jesus throws down His censer to the earth.

What does it represent? The end of His work as our Intercessor in heaven which means Jesus is no longer interceding on the behalf of man nor forgiving sins.

If the seven trumpets are going to blow after Jesus throws down his censer it is very clear that the trumpets are not trumpets of warning to warn people to repent and turn back to God. In other words, when the seven trumpets blow it is too late to ask for forgiveness.

Now is there any talk of war or battle found in any of the seven trumpets? Referring to events of the fifth trumpet what does Revelation 9:7 say?

Revelation 9:7 ⁷And the shapes of the locusts *were* like unto horses ***prepared unto battle***; and on their heads *were* as it were crowns like gold, and their faces *were* as the faces of men.

This sounds like battle to me. So the seven trumpets are not warnings to repent, but sounds of battle and impending doom.

This reminds me of the sounds of the seven trumpets blowing after the children of Israel marched around the walls of Jericho. When the trumpets blew on the seventh day of marching around the city what happened? The walls came down and the city was destroyed. The the trumpets blew on the last day was trumpet sounds of war and disaster.

Let's see a brief example of the first four plagues and how Revelation 8 (the trumpet) and 16 (vials poured out) complement each other.

First Plague: Revelation 16:2 – Effect / Result

Fell Noisome (injurious) and grievous sores – skins ulcers

What was the main cause? Revelation 8:7

First trumpet: Hail and fire mingled with blood.

Second Plague: Revelation 16:3 – Effect / Result

The sea/ocean became as the blood of a dead *man*: and every person in the sea at the time died.

What was the main cause? Revelation 8:7-8

Second trumpet: **Great volcano** 1/3 of the ocean became blood, 1/3 of the living in the sea died both man and sea animals, and 1/3 of all ships on the sea was destroyed.

Third Plague: Revelation 16:4 – Effect / Result

Rivers and fountains of waters became blood

What was the main cause? Revelation 8:10 & 11

Great meteor call Wormwood fell upon 1/3 of the rivers and fountains of waters making the water bitter undrinkable, men died as a result of drinking it.

Fourth Plague: Revelation 16:8 and 9

(What Sun is doing a part of the day?) Sun scorched men with great heat!

What happens to the Sun a 1/3 part of the day (four hours during day hours)? Revelation 8:12

Sun did not give light for four hours (1/3) of the day neither did the moon and star give light at night for 4 hours of the night. (8 hours of total darkness)

“These plagues are not universal, or the inhabitants of the earth would be wholly cut off. Yet they will be the most awful scourges that have ever been known to mortals. All the judgments upon men, prior to the close of probation, have been mingled with mercy. The pleading blood of Christ has shielded the sinner from receiving the full measure of his guilt; but in the final judgment, wrath is poured out unmixed with mercy. GC 628

How long are the seven last plagues?

Revelation 18:8

8 Therefore shall her (Babylon) **plagues come in one day**, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.

Context is symbolic, time also day for a year principle: 1 day = 1 year.

“The ‘time of trouble, such as never was,’ is soon to open upon us; and we shall need an experience which we do not now possess and which many are too indolent to obtain. It is often the case that trouble is greater in anticipation than in reality; but this is not true of the crisis before us. The most vivid presentation cannot reach the magnitude of the ordeal. In that time of trial, every soul must stand for himself before God.” GC 622

This is the GREAT TIME of Trouble which will start at the beginning of a Universal Death Decree!

“As the Sabbath has become the special point of controversy throughout Christendom, and religious and secular authorities have combined to enforce the observance of the Sunday, the persistent refusal of a small minority to yield to the popular demand will make them objects of universal execration. It will be urged that the few who stand in opposition to an institution of the church and a law of the state ought not to be tolerated; that it is better for them to suffer than for whole nations to be thrown into confusion and lawlessness... This argument will appear conclusive; and a decree will finally be issued against those who hallow the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, denouncing them as deserving of the severest punishment and giving the people liberty, after a certain time, to put them to death.” - GC 615

Prayer Wrestling

During the time of trouble which will end with the GREAT time of trouble God’s remnant must do some pray wrestling with God!

“The people of God will then be plunged into those scenes of affliction and distress described by the prophet as the time of Jacob’s trouble. "Thus saith the Lord: We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. . . All faces are turned into paleness. Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble; but he shall be saved out of it." Jeremiah 30:5-7. {GC 616.1}

“Jacob’s night of anguish, when he wrestled in prayer for deliverance from the hand of Esau (Genesis 32:24-30), represents the experience of God’s people in the time of trouble.” - GC 616

Jacob wrestled with God, he held on to the promises of God’s Word. Name changed from Jacob to Israel, God prevails!

Prayer wrestling with God day and night relying on the promises of God’s word will take us through the crisis. His word and His promises must be implanted in your heart now before the crisis! You will be mocked like Jesus, but you MUST remember the promises and prayer wrestle with God!

“As Satan accuses the people of God on account of their sins, the Lord permits him to try them to the uttermost. Their confidence in God, their faith and firmness, will be severely tested. As they review the past, their hopes sink; for in their whole lives they can see little good. They are fully conscious of their weakness and unworthiness. Satan endeavors to terrify them with the thought that their cases are hopeless, that the stain of their defilement will never be washed away. He hopes so to destroy their faith that they will yield to his temptations and turn from their allegiance to God.” GC 618

“They afflict their souls before God, pointing to their past repentance of their many sins, and pleading the Saviour's promise: "Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me." Isaiah 27:5. Their faith does not fail because their prayers are not immediately answered. Though suffering the keenest anxiety, terror, and distress, they do not cease their intercessions. They lay hold of the strength of God as Jacob laid hold of the Angel; and the language of their souls is: "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me." GC 620

“The season of distress and anguish before us will require a faith that can endure weariness, delay, and hunger--a faith that will not faint though severely tried. The period of probation is granted to all to prepare for that time. Jacob prevailed because he was persevering and determined. His victory is an evidence of the power of importunate prayer. All who will lay hold of God's promises, as he did, and be as earnest and persevering as he was, will succeed as he succeeded. Those who are unwilling to deny self, to agonize before God, to pray long and earnestly for His blessing, will not obtain it. Wrestling with God--how few know what it is!” GC 621

Even though God’s people will go through some very distressing times, God is with them! Matter of fact, armies of angels surround them!

During the seven last plagues God’s people will feel the heat, get hungry, but God will supply their needs! They will not perish! Danger will be on every side God will not allow them to be killed.

“Though a general decree has fixed the time when commandment keepers may be put to death, their enemies will in some cases anticipate the decree, and before the time specified, will endeavor to take their lives. But none can pass the mighty guardians stationed about every faithful soul. Some are assailed in their flight from the cities and villages; but the swords raised against them break and fall powerless as a straw. Others are defended by angels in the form of men of war.” GC 631

"They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Malachi 3:17. If the blood of Christ's faithful witnesses were shed at this time, it would not, like the blood of the martyrs, be as seed sown to yield a harvest for God. Their fidelity would not be a testimony to convince others of the truth; for the obdurate heart has beaten back the waves of mercy until they return no more. If the righteous were now left to fall a prey to their enemies, it would be a triumph for the prince of darkness.” GC 634

Delivery is coming.... Hold on to the promises..... Never forget Psalm 91

Psalms 91:1-16

- 1 He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.
- 2 I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.
- 3 Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence.
- 4 He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.
- 5 Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day;
- 6 Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.

- 7 A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.
- 8 Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.
- 9 Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation;
- 10 There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.
- 11 For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.
- 12 They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.
- 13 Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.
- 14 Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.
- 15 He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him.
- 16 With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.