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Why Perilous Times Have Come

By Duane V. Maxey

"This know also, that in the last days **perilous times shall come**" (2 Tim. 3:1)

In 2 Timothy 3:1 Paul states that "perilous times SHALL COME," and I assert that we have reason to believe that those times HAVE ALREADY COME. To say the least, we are now living "in the last days."

It is not my intent to here prove the many reasons why I believe the Bible teaches that the Church shall pass through, not escape from, the coming Tribulation -- all of it. You need not agree with me on this, but let me tell you something folks:-- when in Revelation 3 the pampered and soft Laodicean Church felt snug and smug in its imagined security, the All-Wise Christ declared: "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: **I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire**, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."

TAKE WARNING:-- THE LAODICEAN CHURCH IS NOT GOING TO ESCAPE FROM TRIBULATION VIA A MAGIC-CARPET RIDE TO GLORY! Ere the Last Day Church is raptured, it must be -- and will be -- purged with an holocaust of refining fire! Regardless of one's views on the Rapture and events surrounding the Second Coming of Christ, he or she must admit that what Christ predicted will come to pass: **THE LAODICEAN CHURCH, LONG ACCUSTOMED TO LIVING IN THE LAP OF EASE AND LUXURY WILL BE PURGED IN A GREAT AND FIERY TRIAL -- BEFORE ITS RAPTURE!!**

Has that fiery trial already occurred? -- I trow not -- even when we consider the way Christians have been, and continue to be, tried and martyred in various parts of the world during the past 25 years. For the most part the present day -- the last day -- Church has lived in comfort, luxury and wealth and many of her professed members have fancied that ere the prophesied Tribulation struck they would be wafted off to glory on the wings of a snow-white dove, as it were, totally escaping the whole thing! I say that the professed Church of the 21st Century is in for an even greater shock than that which shook America on September 11, 2001 -- that greater shock coming to the Church when she has finally awakened to the fact that she is passing through -- not escaping from -- the Tribulation -- all of it.

See my views on eschatology explained in great detail in my book, "His Appearing and His Kingdom" (hdm0124), found on all three of the HDM CDs. I have no desire to debate the matter, nor to arouse such where it results in nothing more than division. However, the "troublous times" predicted by Daniel and the "perilous times" predicted by Paul shall come to pass, and in light of this I think it would be well for all present-day Christians to take stock of the fact that **THE FIERY TRIAL PREDICTED BY CHRIST TO COME UPON THE LAODICEAN CHURCH HAS NOT YET OCCURRED, BUT MAY SOON COME** -- ITS PORTENT BEING SEEN IN THE EVENTS OF RECENT WEEKS! -- perilous times have come!

But the main topic of this little article is to discuss briefly **THE REASONS WHY PERILOUS TIMES HAVE COME**, and the apostle gives those reasons in the succeeding verses, 2 Timothy 3:2-5:

(1) Perilous times have come BECAUSE MEN LOVE THEIR OWN SELVES:-- "perilous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of their own selves.." Not all self-love is wrong, for the Bible commands in Leviticus 19:18 (and elsewhere): "Love thy neighbour as thyself." It is that love of self which excludes a genuine love of God and love of one's neighbor that is at the bottom of many of our current perils. This sort of self-love not only loves itself, but demands the adulation and worship of itself by others also, and those who refuse such obeisance become the objects of its ferocious hatred and hostility. As illustrated in the Biblical story of Haman and Mordecai in the Book of Esther, the more men love themselves, the more they hate others who refuse to bow to their demands. They will, as it were, prepare a gallows for all who insult their pontifical selves, and thus perilous times come! The world is now filled with the likes of Haman who plot to wipe out every Mordecai that will not bend the knee to their self-god.

(2) Perilous times have come BECAUSE MEN ARE COVETOUS:-- "perilous times shall come, for men shall be.. covetous.." First Timothy 6:9 declares that it is "they that **will be rich**" who fall into temptation and a snare "which drown men in destruction and perdition." In other words, it is covetousness, not necessarily riches themselves, that endangers people. Never before in the history of the world has there been as much covetousness as now! With little exception, the world can now be divided into two great

"wealthy" and "wannabe wealthy" groups. The huge (successes?) of lotteries and gambling casinos in the US are only part of the evidence pointing to a world that is now largely given over to "getting rich" and to "getting rich quick" if possible. The Bible command, "Thou shalt not covet" applies to more than money and material possessions, but in those areas alone, we can see another big reason why perilous times have come. The more you covet, the less you care about what pain your personal acquisitions bring upon others -- yea, the more likely you are to shed the blood of those who deny your lust for more!

(3) Perilous times have come BECAUSE MEN ARE BOASTFUL:-- "perilous times shall come, for men shall be.. boasters.." Both Daniel 7:8 and Rev. 13:5 prophecy that the anti-Christ shall have **"a mouth speaking great things."** He shall be the greatest boaster that ever lived, but he only personifies the braggart spirit of millions "in the last days." When have men boasted more than now! -- and when has that boasting caused more trouble on earth than today?!! The apostle James wrote: "The tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" (James 3:5). Boasting always produces incendiary results, both in the heart of the boaster and in the hearts of those offended by him -- or her. James went on to write of the boastful tongue that "it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.. it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison" (James 5:6, 8).

Prize-fighter Cassius Clay, who took upon himself the Muslim name, Mohammed Ali, used to boast, "I'M THE GREATEST!" Perhaps many wrote this off as nothing more than "PR" to attract attention to himself in order to raise bigger crowds, sell more tickets to the fights, and thus to enlarge his purses. Also, some may think that a braggadocios tongue is more disgusting than it is harmful, but that is not the picture painted by the apostle. Boasters literally "set on fire the whole course" of their lives. They are like the foxes whose tails were set on fire by Samson: they inflame others wherever they go, igniting controversy, discord, division, and warfare. Or, to change the figure, the boaster's tongue "is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison" more perilous to the health of humanity than the current Anthrax bacteria now plaguing our nation. Perilous times have come folks -- and to a large degree because of boasting. Think about it -- the boasting that imperils our world is a plague that is carried and spread by millions, not just by loud-mouth sports figures. The incendiary, poisonous "mouth speaking great things" is possessed and used by masses of anti-Christian people today, and even by many who profess to love Christ. Such big-mouths are creating big-trouble in these last times!

(4) Perilous times have come BECAUSE PEOPLE ARE PROUD:-- "perilous times shall come, for men shall be.. proud.." Pride is a sickness that makes everyone sick but the person who has it. Further, carnal pride hates all who do not love and flatter the person possessing and manifesting it. Thus, God hates it, and it hates God! But the Bible prophesies that it will increase in the latter times, so much so that the time will

come when "the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable" (Isa. 3:5). We are there now.

Never have so many been so proud with so little for which to be proud. Ego inflation occurs in the children who now make a mockery of their parents and elders who seek to discipline them. People of every age are now manifesting more pride in more ways than ever before -- in their words, in their behavior, in their dress and undress, and in their spirit. One reason why carnal pride increases the peril of our times can be seen in Proverbs 13:10. The KJV translation of this verse reads: "Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom." The NIV reads: "Pride only breeds quarrels, but wisdom is found in those who take advice."

"THOSE WHO TAKE ADVICE!" -- it was written of Nabal that he was "such a son of Belial, that a man cannot speak to him" (1 Sam. 25:17). And, Eccl 4:13 declares: "Better is a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished." One of the troubles created by pride today is, that from the lowly-cradle to the exalted-crown people are too proud to listen to others, too proud to take advice, and hell-bent on having their own way, regardless of the consequences! Thus, by such pride comes world-wide contention, war, and peril! Again, that's where we are now.

(5) Perilous times have come BECAUSE PEOPLE ARE BLASPHEMING GOD AS NEVER BEFORE:-- "perilous times shall come, for men shall be.. blasphemers.." Leviticus 24:16 commanded: "he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the Lord, shall be put to death." The more men have blasphemed God -- in the person of Christ and otherwise -- the more perilous have become our times. A blasphemous world is not now being taken out and stoned by God's people, but -- make no mistake about it -- blasphemy is always punished! -- "for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain" (Exodus 20:7).

Trouble and peril on earth are directly connected with blasphemy. Consider 2 Kings 19:3-- "Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and blasphemy." Personifying the entire anti-Christian society of the last days, we read of the man of sin that "he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven" (Rev. 13:6). And, repeatedly we see in the Book of Revelation the accompanying perils and pain associated with that blasphemy. Here is but one example: "And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory" (Rev. 16:9). Notice: God had power over the plagues, but as they increased their blasphemy, so was increased their peril and pain. Selah.

(6) Perilous times are now come BECAUSE MILLIONS HAVE BEEN, AND ARE, DISOBEDIENT TO PARENTS:-- "perilous times shall come, for men shall be..

disobedient to parents.." -- There is a direct connection between the lack of disciplining children with the current breakdown in law and order. Coddled "kids" who have never been disciplined nor punished by their parents often turn into teenagers and adults who hate government of every sort, many of whom will kill to have their own way. Thus, today we have something akin to anarchy in many ghettos and areas of our land, with rampant crimes of all sorts, including the most heinous murders imaginable! -- all because "disobedience" to parents has long been permitted and even encouraged in our land.

(7) Perilous times are now come BECAUSE PEOPLE ARE TERRIBLY UNTHANKFUL:-- "perilous times shall come, for men shall be.. unthankful.." Thanksgiving is another holiday -- a day off from hated employment, a time to feast, make merry, and to be entertained. Thanksgiving in its true sense is almost extinct, heard less often from many American lips than dinosaur bones are seen on the country-side. Yes, true thanksgiving is more than a thoughtlessly-spoken, audible expression, but it is always accompanied by spoken expressions. One who is truly thankful, either to God or Man, wants to say so -- and does. I have noted in the HDM work how many say THANKS via their emails, and how some seldom, if ever, do that. Unthankfulness is a plague that has widely infected even professed Christendom.

In Jeremiah 30:17 & 19 we read of fallen Israel: "I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord... and out of them shall proceed thanksgiving." Their restoration and healing would evoke thanksgiving from their lips -- the obvious opposite being their plague, their peril and their bondage when they offered no thanks. The less thankful a people, the more peril in which they dwell. This, then, is another reason for our perilous times. God protects and provides for the thankful, but when they become ungrateful for his many blessings, people are often exposed to various and increasing perils. Isn't it interesting, how Americans almost instantly began singing "God bless America" when peril struck on September 11, 2001? One thing it always takes to be "restored, healed" and delivered from peril is real heartfelt and openly expressed thankfulness to our Creator.

(8) Perilous times have come BECAUSE PEOPLE ARE UNHOLY:-- "perilous times shall come, for men shall be.. unholy.." When a nation slips into the slough of immoral nastiness (the very opposite of holiness), then inevitably comes peril. Peril from the cesspools of prostitution, X-rated movies and videos, and pornography of every sort which breed lust, disease, crime and murder. The nastier a nation is, the more peril there is on their streets. An old song said: "Love and marriage, love and marriage, go together like a horse and carriage, you can't have one my brother, you can't have one without the other!" Well, filthiness and peril also go together like a horse and carriage -- YOU CAN'T HAVE IT WITHOUT HAVING PERIL! One of the big reasons why our world is now exceedingly perilous is because it is exceedingly filthy!

(9) Perilous times have come BECAUSE MEN ARE PERVERTED:-- "perilous times shall come, for men shall be.. without natural affection.." After her creation, God

said to Eve concerning her natural attraction: "thy desire shall be to thy husband" -- and it goes without saying that the natural attraction of Adam was to his wife. When perversion took over Sodom, peril followed quickly on its heels, and every Bible reader knows the outcome. Jesus also predicted that these last days would be "as in the days of Sodom." Once again, perversion and peril are wed. Daniel records of the anti-Christ, "Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, **nor the desire of women..**" (Daniel 11:37). I am not sure that the original language of this verse either confirms or disallows that the anti-Christ will be a man of perverted desires, but whatever the case about this scripture, it would not surprise me if he did turn out to be an homosexual, for he shall rule when Sodomy and Sodomites will be in the majority -- just as in the days of Lot. Mark it down, perversion and peril also "go together like a horse and carriage" -- you can't have perversion without peril!

To allow, and to brand as normal, the filthy practices of homosexuals and lesbians is to flatten the walls of providential protection and to imperil society to more than AIDS -- by so doing, a wicked world is exposed to the wrath of Almighty God, Who vehemently hates this awful perversion!! Mark it down:-- there will not be any such perverts in heaven! Romans 1:27 declares that those who practice Sodomy receive in themselves that recompense of their error which is "meet" -- or deserved -- and that recompense is found in the Lake of Fire!! -- not in the New Jerusalem!

(10) Perilous times have come BECAUSE OF THESE REASONS ALSO:--
"perilous times shall come, for men shall be... trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof."

A chapter could be written on each of these other reasons given by Paul for the coming perilous times. Each of them increases the present perils of our world "in the last days," just as the apostle predicted. However, I forbear further comment, which, beyond what I have already written, will not be necessary to convince any thinking, Bible-believer that we are indeed now living in "perilous times". I believe that conditions now existing around our troubled globe ominously portend more to follow -- more perils in their number, more in their threat and jeopardy, and more in the intensity of their inflicted pain, suffering, and death.

I believe that it is the Indignation, the pouring out of the 7th vial, that Christians shall escape, for its plagues shall be specifically upon the beast and his followers. I shall not split eschatological hairs with those who dispute my views, for I agree that their IS a deliverance that shall be provided for all of God's saints at the end.

In Luke 21:36, Jesus said: "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." I understand that the Greek for "escape all these things" might also be rendered: "escape -- out from among -- all these things." But it is not the time of the

saints' escape that is most important. It is, rather, the fact of that escape. When an anti-Christian world "shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape" (1 Thess. 5:3). But Paul's remarks did not end there. In the next sentence he wrote: "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief" (1 Thess. 5:4).

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THE END