

Things to Come: The Great Tribulation

Dan. 9.24-27; 12.1-11; Matt. 24.9-21; 2 Thess. 2.1-10; Rev. 6.12-17

Bible prophecy foretells of a time of unparalleled suffering; Jesus called it a time of “great tribulation.” This awful time has been sensationalized in novels and movies, but is this something we should take seriously? If so, why? Why would God do this to the world?! Let’s see...

What is ‘The Great Tribulation’

- A time of unparalleled worldwide calamities
- A time when people will want to die rather than live

But wait...is this really going to happen, or is it just symbolic?

Why is there a Great Tribulation?

- God’s restraint of evil will be taken away
- God’s wrath will be poured out on a sinful world
- God’s persistent offer of forgiveness will be shown

Will you bow the knee to Jesus now...or then?



Digging Deeper

1. To understand the biblical prophecies of the Great Tribulation, we first have to understand the awfulness of sin. When we think of terrible catastrophes, we usually think of natural disasters, or wars, or terrorism, and other events that afflict our world. But what event spawned *all* these awful things? (See Genesis 3, and Romans 5.12.)
2. We are *very adept* at minimizing the awfulness of sin – but not God. This may be a bit of a stretch, but reflect on what you know of the holiness of God: How would you articulate *His* response to sin?
3. Consider events in the Old Testament (start with the flood, and go from there!): How did God respond to sin? What does the New Testament tell us about God’s response to sin *now*? (See Romans 1.18-32) What is the effect of sin on the world today (see Rom. 8.18-25)? Are you beginning to sense the full awfulness of sin?
4. Now consider the price God paid in order to rescue us from our own sin – our rebellion against Him! 2 Corinthians 5.21 in the New Living Translation summarizes it well: *For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.* Add to this that even though God did this, mankind embraces his sin, and rejects His offer of forgiveness and salvation! Do you see why God would declare a time of final judgment on a sinful world?
5. Finally, to get a sense of God’s amazing grace – even in the time when He is unleashing His wrath on a sinful world, read Revelation 7.1-17; 11.3-13; 14.1-12. These and other prophecies indicate that many will come to faith during the tribulation! Pastor and theologian David Jeremiah writes: “Even during the Tribulation, God’s grace is still available. There will be unprecedented revival and recognition of Jesus as the Messiah, particularly among the Jewish people.” (David Jeremiah, *The Book of Signs*) Are you beginning to grasp the full character of God – His holiness and justice, and at the same time His amazing love and grace?