

Hope To The End (Part Two)

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As I begin this sermon I want you to understand that this is part two of the message that I gave on the Feast of Trumpets, and if things go as I planned there will be one more message. That message on the Feast of Trumpets gave us an overview of the general anxiety in the United States of America, leading to a vague sense in many people of hopelessness regarding what is going and that this never will never get itself straightened out.

I will begin this sermon in Deuteronomy 30. These are scriptures that we use quite often because they are so pointed, so clear, but it is necessary to be the kind of things that we go over very frequently to be reminded of the necessity of the choices that we make in life.

Deuteronomy 30:15-20 “See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil, in that I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, His judgments, that you may live and multiply; and the Lord your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess. But if your heart turns away so that you do not hear, and are drawn away, and worship other gods and serve them, I announce to you today that you shall surely perish; you shall not prolong your days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to go in and possess. I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; that you may love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.”

There are several reasons why I am going through this particular series of sermons. The first reason is because I want us to have a good depth of understanding of how we, the United States, got into this deplorable national morality crisis. Knowing the details of this gives understanding and understanding strengthens faith.

The second reason is because God has clearly ordained these conditions that are listed, given very clearly in Matthew 24, Luke 21, and Mark 13. Therefore we must live in it, and through it, and make the most of some of the advantages that provide us with growth. Right now things look pretty clear that unless God should intervene we are going to go through at least the opening stages of the tribulation, and maybe even the tribulation. I will get to that later on.

Third reason is I want us to clearly understand *why* it happened, and I will tell you right now what that is: bad choices—by the trillions. Our Israelitish ancestors kept making the same mistakes over and over. In our history, the Israelitish history, it is almost like a family trait. God, here is where it comes to us, is going to ensure through our experiences, while having His Holy Spirit, that it never happens again.

The fourth reason is we not only need these experiences for our own personal growth in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, but we need a broad understanding of cause and effect. Both secular and spiritual histories as a boost to our faith as we endure the trials as they come upon us.

At this time as God's purposes unfold we find ourselves living in the moral detritus of an educational war spawned by the master destroyer in his attempts to destroy the people and the nations on earth most closely associated with the Creator. I mean of course the Israelitish nations, who like the prodigal son have wasted their inheritance. Has any group of people ever been given such a beautiful fruitful land to live in as us? I hardly wonder that something like even exists.

What we are living within is what resulted from the abandonment of truth—God-given truth in God's words to be the foundation and the source of education in every facet of life. Now I laid the foundation of what has happened leading to our time, in a long string of commentaries on the philosophers who have set the stage for the kind of life that we are living right now, showing how they in turn used their teachings to lay the groundwork for the end time educational approach to be devoid of God, but established firmly in human science.

In those commentaries I researched back 700 years to get information on these people. The reason I bring this up because I want you to be impressed by how long Satan has been prepared, or preparing, for the time that we live in. He set a beautiful educational trap. Is there any nation that is more interested in education than the United States? Britain is right up there as well, but it turned out to be a trap, and it is very clear why it became a trap.

Rather than God we have accepted the discoveries of human knowledge, science falsely so called, as being the seed bed and the soil of Western civilization. As we begin we must understand that the founders of this nation were not true Christians. They were religious people, they had a great deal of Christian law and principles in their minds but they were not Christians and they never were Christians. The guiding principles cobbled together by the founders of this nation inserted a fair amount of biblical principles within the Constitution but they were not perfectly aligned with the Creator's Word. In addition to that, there was no covenant made with God by any of the nations of Israel.

I am sure the other Israelitish nations, mostly located in Europe and other places in the world, they made no covenant with God either. I am talking about the governmental figures who represented us. Also, though many of these people emigrating here were in fact fleeing religious persecution in their homeland in order to latch on to what they were hearing what was going on in the Americas, but among all those people who emigrated here in those early years, there was no Moses, no Joshua, no Caleb, no Aaron, to provide truly righteous leadership right from the top from a relationship with God.

You hear very much now by some people talking about the founders of this nation, and that they laid down a religious base that was drawn from Christianity. That is partly true, but like I said they were not Christian. How many of them can you name who actually kept the Sabbath? How about the holy days? You will not find any, that is why I came to the conclusion they were never Christians. They were certainly a great deal more religious oriented than most of the people are today, they had a good bit of the Bible in their minds, and they quoted from God frequently, but they were not Christians.

There is no doubt that many of the colonists were sincerely religious and generally quite moral in their conduct as compared to what we live in today. Those people probably provided better leadership than they left behind in Europe when they made their way here. They were close enough in their own personal character, as well as what they put into the foundational doctrines of this

nation, that they provided a way of life that helped tremendously the citizenry here to rise to become the envy of the world in terms of prosperity, and thus other immigrants flocked here to share in it as well.

How much did God do to make this nation prosperous? We do not want to forget about Him, because He brought us here in the first place. Many of those immigrants were fellow Israelites immigrating from European nations, they came from England, Dutch, Scots, Germanic, French, and smaller numbers from other Western world nations.

What the founders plotted out in by way of laws and governance worked fairly well for just under 200 years. But all the while that was going on, secular knowledge also was increasing by leaps and bounds. But that knowledge was not in any way close to godly knowledge, and much of it in fact is humanistic, and its influence was burying divine knowledge formerly taught in our universities.

Roughly about 80 years ago we began turning our backs wholesale on that original guidance from which the Constitution was constructed. As the disbelief in the Constitution and God's Word lessened it greatly accelerated our plummeting descent into what now exists in this nation's standards.

This nation began at a high and serious respect for God and His Scriptures, but things have changed greatly in that area of life, so we are going to take a broad look and an application of cause and effect from the Scriptures.

Proverbs 29:18 Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; but happy is he who keeps the law.

What is contained within this verse constitutes a large portion of the Israelitish downfall in virtually every aspect of life. The Living Bible translates this more biblically by saying,

Proverbs 29:18 Where there is no revelation, the people run wild.

The Revised English Bible translates this even more, but still does not lose the sense of what the verses are indicating.

Proverbs 29:18 With no one in authority, the people throw off all restraint.

Do you think this has happened? Are we losing our restraint? This is certainly what happened in the United States of America. Regardless of the exact translation the proverb describes well the result of turning to some form of carnal human expression and its humanly contrived knowledge as our guide and standards. This is why I began in Deuteronomy 30, God says "I've given you My law, My judgments, My statutes, choose them," which is exactly what we are not doing.

This declaration by Solomon here in Proverbs refers to two forms of God's revelation: one is vision, and the other is law, both of which have been rejected by this nation. Vision has to do with what one is using to set profitable goals for achievement in his life. Our vision ought to pertain to the Kingdom of God, by ours I mean those of us who are in the church, that should be our vision.

Law has to do with firmly setting one's behavior while pursuing what his hope or vision is. He does not go beyond the law, he does not cheat, he does not steal, he does not lie, and so forth. If he is going to achieve his vision a godly way then that is what he is going to do.

The Hebrew term underlying the English translation *revelation*, simply indicates a communication, very broad. All it does is indicate a communication. However the context narrows things down quite a bit. In this context the communication is obviously from God. The communication itself can be spoken, written, or even as a sign or a signal. Now unless the context clearly states it, the timing of the original communication is unimportant. It simply exists as an instruction, but in this case, because it is clearly from God it should be heeded, because whatever the counsel is from God it is *always* wisdom regardless whether it is from 2,000 years, or 10,000 years after the time when He sent forth the revelation. In this case, it is from God.

Now, if the communication of wisdom from God is not heeded, the result will be certain and without deviation. The translators saw that very clearly, that is why they translated it the way they did. If there is no revelation the people run wild. That is pretty clear. Because there is no guidance and the people are left up to be determining what they are doing, what they choose to do, from some other source. They turn away from the revelation.

Because the communication of wisdom from God is not heeded spiritual, moral, social, economic, and political anarchy results. That is bluntly clear in the communication from God. That is what has happened to the United States of America. We rejected His revelation and chose science instead to pattern our lives by, and after.

That is strong blunt counsel that Americans do not like to hear, on the other hand if it is heeded then blessing will follow. The verse shows that as well. The proverb shows cause and effect as clearly as a road map of a country area with only one road marked.

I will make this proverb truly plain. Where there is ignorance of God, because the people rejected His communication, crime and sin run wild. Just take the people out of it; they are doing it but that is what they are doing. Here is a clear conclusion, it is my own, but nonetheless I think you know that it is right. Public morality, think of the United States, *depends* on possessing the knowledge of God and submitting to it to what He says. Without the revelation of God, the people run wild. That is a pretty good translation.

This is literally what happened in the United States. The restraints on human nature are off, because the people have basically rejected God's counsel, and instead established their own. They do not believe they are accountable to Him.

As I have been gradually showing you the citizenry of Western world has had help turning their back on God in what they have been deceitfully educated by Satan, and enslaved by him right out of our rights to our liberties. Satan is still deceiving the whole world, and most primary damage to our liberties was accomplished by the government seeking more power than it already has. *The Interpreters Commentary* makes an interesting statement regarding cause and effect. It states, "that as the citizens behavior grows less restrained, the government responds by increasing the intensity of its means of control of the citizens, by means of exercising its already existing powers over the people in order to retain in control."

Do you know what that results in? In other words, not keeping the Proverbs 29:18 principle, sets up a tit-for-tat situation. That is almost exactly what has happened here in the United States of America so that the government and the citizens are almost at war against each other as each tries to firm up its position.

The citizens lose their liberties, they go a little more wild, and they attack the government in some way. If this would go on long enough there would be a revolution. Is that not interesting that the founders of this nation allowed us, right in the Constitution, to keep our guns? Do you know why they did that? I am not kidding you. They did that, because if the government ever goes bad, you can throw them out, shoot them. I am being blunt.

Much of it was accomplished by the government by means of bribery, by people in office manipulating the powers of the purse to persuade the citizenry to accept the government's proposition, This manipulation resulted from those already in office manipulating government business in their favor. We hear about that every day on the radio and TV news now.

Most secondary damage was accomplished by means of the government school systems, beginning in the universities way back 600-700 years ago and developing to when the United States was founded, they were ready pounce. Harvard University, the oldest university in the United States, was begun, I believe, by a church. Within a dozen years the church had been pushed aside. The same thing happened to Yale, they became bastions, not of God's Word, but of human reason.

It gradually filtered down so that by today socialist concepts, which are not of biblical origin, are being taught even in *kindergarten*. Socialism is not godly government. Do not get me wrong, governments have good reason to promote themselves and their standards, and their systems by means of an educational system. God does that. He is educating us, He is building a government, and He is providing an education for us to be a part of it. So it is not wrong that the government should have an educational system. What that does is, it tends to build a self-perpetuating system with all people in government essentially speaking the same thing.

The problem is, that what they teach is not God's truth, it is not the revelation of God. It is simply what they desire because it benefits their agenda, and their agenda is clearly not God's agenda. God authorizes no government of any circumstance to turn away from His truth.

Maybe this will be a shock to you but it is also a part of the truth here. We the people, not just those in the church, I am talking about the citizenry of the United States of America, are to blame because we really did not grasp what was going on because our minds were elsewhere. The Constitution clearly gives the people the right to throw the malefactors out. The destruction of this country began very quickly, right at the beginning, because the average street citizen did not know of the evil seed that Satan had already sown in the universities. His harvest in this nation was about to begin and therefore with it went the change of their hearts.

Judges 21:25 In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

We are going to expand on this a bit. The first thing we need to understand is that this verse is not saying that religion was not being practiced in Israel. What it is clearly saying is that a great deal of the nation's people were still practicing religion. "Everyone did what was right in their own eyes." There was religion going on. However, it was not the religion God gave Israel to practice. Mankind will worship regardless of whether he has truth or not. It was instead a religion each person was devising as *his* religion, according to his desires.

We use the term humanism, some people use the word secularism, regardless they are both false religion. They are religions not with specific meeting places, a formal set of doctrines, few or no rites

or ceremonies. Neither do they have a formal set way of life, many of these people become nones, these are people who put on the forms they fill out when they are asked of their religious affiliation, they write none. In other words, they are not connected to any church, to any religion. They have no religious affiliation.

Humanism is a term that indicates that its adherents have cast off belief in, and authority of the Creator God, and have thus chosen their way. Humanists become their religion's god. This religion automatically, without fail, produces each person as being god in his own humanly devised religion. A humanist cannot call upon the standards of the Creator God that he does not know. Humanists neither trust nor believe His Word.

Why am I saying this about humanists? Because I think this is what was going on here in Israel back in Judges. Those people were humanist too, they did not like the Creator God for some reason, He was too stringent, He caused too much restraint in their life, so they just went off and formed their own religion.

The humanists neither trust nor believe His Word, and thus his way of life is invariably going to be different from God's and his neighbor's on many counts and this gives rise to numerous disagreements because we act according to our beliefs. What has this led to? Our nation has sown the wind and it is reaping the whirlwind.

Right here within our country debating, bickering, outright fighting, suing one another in court, and even death sometimes occurs in the presence of such things. This eventually produces chaos as though it were ordained. This is precisely what Proverbs 29:18 is saying. "Where there is no revelation, chaos will result." The people run wild, off the beaten path.

Unity, and therefore its fruit, peace, might be the very first victim of this way of life. One thing the humanist often overlooks is, that when he becomes a humanist he also surrenders any real and true justification for complaints if somebody sins against them. Why? Because the other sinner too has, when he abandoned the true God and appointed himself god of his religion, is just like the one sinned against. He is merely following his own standard of behavior, or the nations highly irregular standard, none of which are God's.

God's way produces peace among His people because they all believe the same thing, and they all do the same things. How can there possibly be peace and harmonious abundant productivity when everybody's mind is running about without restraint, clashing into others who see things differently.

You are witnessing it. We are living through a period of time during which the moral and spiritual foundations of what had been the most prosperous, strongest, and most stable nation on earth is close to being destroyed. Why? Because our internal stability has already been destroyed. The internal stability should have been anchored in God Himself. We had every opportunity to take advantage of what had been given to us by the Creator. It worked for a while, but not for a long while.

Since we find ourselves in this kind of condition, we are living right within it, it is swirling around us, we do not want to get drawn into it, and we have no power to smash it.

Psalm 11:1-5 In the Lord I put my trust; how can you say to my soul, "Flee as a bird to your mountain?" For look! The wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow on the string, that they may shoot secretly at the upright in heart [apply this to the United

States]. If the foundations are destroyed [That is what we are living through. The foundations are in the process of being destroyed.], what can the righteous do? [The first thing we have to do is in verse 4.] The Lord is in His holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven; His eyes behold, His eyelids test the sons of men. The Lord tests the righteous [This is for you and me.], but the wicked and the one who loves violence His soul hates.

The counsel that is given here gives understanding, If we allow ourselves to get caught up in the deterioration that is taking place, it will have a predictable affect. We must first make efforts to make sure that this does not come to pass in our life. This is the purpose of this sermon. I am just giving you overviews that you know well are going on if you are paying any attention at all to what is being written, what is on the Internet, radio, and what is on TV, and the news that comes to us. We must first make efforts to make sure this does not come to pass in our life. *Choose God's way.*

When the earth is crumbling, what do you do? You grab hold to the most stable thing you know. I am telling you right now the revelation of God is the most stable thing you know about conducting your life.

This nation seemingly had everything going for it, but in very short order, I mean historically, it now seems as though little is going right for it. Do you know what some of the fruits this will be? It is already happening.

What I am going to go through with you now is what happened to Job, when that catastrophe happened to him. Because it gives us a fairly clear predicable affect of what will happen to us if we do not turn to God and allow Him to be the ruler of our life, by following His way of life.

Job experienced a major disaster in his life and we know, of course, that this was formed and shaped by God.

Job 1:1-3 There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job and that man was blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil. And seven sons and three daughters were born to him. Also, his possessions were seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred female donkeys, and very large household, so that this man was the greatest of all the people of the East.

At the beginning of this book Job is presented to us as a man who fears God and in his own personal activities he shuns evil, and until this time prospered. He is considered as a spiritually mature man and a man of integrity. Individually I think it is possible that we generally might fit somewhere into his example, Having Job's wealth is not a requirement for producing the distressful fruit that it did in his life.

Here he is called the greatest of all the people of the East. We might also use him as a metaphor in a sense that he is like the entire United States all wrapped up in one person. Or maybe even all the Western world, where mostly Israelitish people live, rolled up into one person. In another sense, he could be one of us, except that we do not have the singular level of material prosperity, but our spirituality should be fairly similar to his.

Listen carefully as we read the direction of his mind and attitude as he is pulled by the changes in his circumstance. This is my concern for us. Are we going to be pulled by changes in our circumstance as they continue to advance and grow within the United States all in the wrong direction? This

illustrates my concern regarding the declining quality of life in America and in the Western world. Are we going to be pulled into the decline? Sucked in as in a whirlpool.

It is declining morally, nothing is as safe as it formerly was, and it is declining economically, socially, and these will effect us even though the changes may not happen rapidly, as rapidly as they did with Job. How are we going to adjust our life and attitude as life continues to unravel in the United States of America? In Job's case suddenness is a part of his scenario, his wealth and health were taken and his entire world seemed to collapse.

This is my concern. We have been set up for a fall. I do not mean the church. I mean the United States of America, thus suddenness can be a part of our circumstances too. Listen as the effects begin to build within Job. You know the essential elements of this teaching lesson.

One of the first things that happen is that three men who were apparently Job's good friends begin arguing with him about the cause of Job's new circumstance and how to deal with it. They leaped to accuse Job himself as being the cause of the problem. His friends and neighbors became persecutors of this obviously godly man, who was shortly before perceived as a wonderful friend and neighbor. Do you think it is possible that anybody in your neighborhood who knows you, becomes the persecutor of you as things turn worse in this nation?

What I am interested in is how all the negativity surrounding Job affected Job, especially concerning his outlook on life. The question for us is, as living conditions deteriorate all around us and our life is seriously impacted, will we react as Job did?

Listen carefully to Job's words.

Job 7:1-7 "Is there not a time of hard service for man on earth? Are not his days also like the days of a hired man? Like a servant who earnestly desires the shade, and like a hired man who eagerly looks for his wages. So I have been allotted months of futility, and wearisome nights have been appointed to me [Job is complaining on how hard life has become now that he seemingly lost everything. That is what is at the base of this. Job knew he was not the cause of this, he had been righteous. How could it produce this kind of thing?]. When I lie down, I say, when shall I arise, and the night be ended? For I have had my fill of tossing till dawn. My flesh is caked with worms and dust, my skin is cracked and breaks out afresh. My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope. Oh, remember that my life is a breath! My eye will never again see good."

It seems to him that he has been *enlisted*, he said this has been allotted to me, I did not seek this out, it is something against his will, and this oppressive circumstance will continue on until he is relieved by death. That is out of his own mouth. He said his life is full of tossing and turning, meaning that his life has become unsettled, that it is full of restlessness. Then we come to verses 6 and 7 which are extremely descriptive saying that time is going by in a blur. He is losing his focus, and he has lost hope that things will change for the better.

Job 7:8-10 "The eye of him who sees me will see me no more; while your eyes are upon me, I shall no longer be. As the cloud disappears and vanishes away, so he who goes down to the grave does not come up. He shall never return to his house, nor shall his place know him anymore."

Job has already reached the place where he desires death. Living was no fun anymore. This came upon Job, he did not start it, he became involved in it because it was swirling around him.

Job 17:10-16 “But please come back again, all of you, for I shall not find one wise man among you. My days are past, my purpose are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart. They change the night into day; ‘the light is near,’ they say, in the face of darkness. If I wait for the grave as my house, if I make my bed in the darkness, if I say to corruption, ‘You are my father,’ [rotting in the grave] and to the worm, ‘You are my mother and my sister,’ where then is my hope? [Again, he brings up that word.] As for my hope, who can see it? Will they go down to the gates of Sheol? Shall we have rest together in the dust?”

Let us consider this again. Are we going to react this way as things change? Do not forget what we are looking at because we too are seeing the damaging affects being forced to feel the effects of rapidly changing living circumstances in the world around us. In verse 10, he is looking for wisdom to escape from the stresses, but he cannot find it. In verses 11, and 12, his depression is so intense he feels he is about to die, and that night and day are the same to him. Time in Job’s mind was blurring together.

Can you see what is happening? He is gradually losing heart. However, remember Psalm 11, God is still on His throne. Remember that God has promised He will never give us more than we can bear. Job was living pretty well until God decided to do this to him. Now the shoe is on the other foot and he is suffering along with the world.

In verses 13-16, he fears his life will end and all of his hope will be buried with him in the pit.

Job 19:7-12 "If I cry out concerning wrong, I am not heard. If I cry aloud, there is no justice. He has fenced up my way, so that I cannot pass; and He has set darkness in my paths. He has stripped me of my glory, and taken the crown from my head. He breaks me down on every side, and I am gone; My hope [there it is again!] He has uprooted like a tree. He has also kindled His wrath against me, and He counts me as one of His enemies. His troops come together and build up their road against me; they encamp all around my tent."

Job is now desperately looking for help but no one comes to his aid. Where is God? In verses 8-10, he feels he is in prison, life is stripped of meaning. In verses 11-12, *everybody* is his enemy and he is without hope. We can turn to the blessing and curses in Deuteronomy 28:66-67. God prophesied that this would happen to the Israelitish people if they did not choose His way.

What we are reading here in the book of Job, is where the Israelitish nations are headed in their attitudes, in their outlook on life, because contact with and a relationship with God is absolutely essential to one having a sustaining hope, even under very stressful circumstances.

Now what should we do when the foundation collapses? Job thought God had abandoned him. Job was thoroughly depressed. Job lost hope.

I began this sermon with deliberate forethought because I believe I have a responsibility from God to do what I can to get us prepared, not only for the times that we are already living in, but also for far worse that appears to be just beyond the horizon. I think that those of you who have some awareness

of well-established patterns in the history of nations, nations arise and come to power among other nations on the wings of a clear vision, strong disciplined morality, and national spirit of its citizenry. And those same nations fall in the wake of a protracted blurred vision, declining of the disciplined morality, and spirit.

It happened to Greece, Rome, Babylon, Medo-Persian, and now we are well along the way of it happening to us. As the positive factors that built this nation decline, they are replaced by a moral debauchery when the citizens no longer believe it is necessary for them to make personal sacrifices to hold the strength of the nation together.

Whenever the original vigorous, muscular grip the people had on their personal lives dissipated, and the citizens became far more concerned about themselves personally, the nation's strength decayed. The process is clear, and the fruit is clear.

This is where I perceive this nation is today. It is at a *very critical crossroad*. There is still the possibility that it can be turned about, but I personally do not feel we are going to turn. We are not going to turn because I think time is running out. God's patience is being exhausted.

The moral debauchery is clear, and our national immorality is leading us into debt greater than any other nation in history. These realities already stand as marks that this nation is on its way down and out. Jesus predicted it almost word for word.

Matthew 24:4-8 And Jesus answered and said to them; "Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows."

Notice in the first group of scriptures that what is prophesied are all kinds of events that we have been experiencing right along. Wars and rumors of wars. Over the past 30-40 years we are almost daily deluged with news about wars, in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Iran, Egypt, Liberia, Syria. How about earthquakes, tornadoes, global warming, massive migrations of homeless people, and terrorism to the nth degree. And these are only the *beginning* of sorrows, in other words the worst is yet to come. and God has already determined we too must face the worst to come.

Do you realize the reason God gave us Matthew 24? We can read in it things that Jesus said, and we know that they are happening right around us, right now. He did that in order to prepare for it, to get our minds adjusted, that we might be called to live through that and deal with it.

Matthew 24:9-13 "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake, And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved."

There is no reason Jesus to give us warning like this unless He knows for sure that some of us are going to go through it. I do not want you to think of it as being a punishment. It may be for a witness, God has His reasons. He has always had people witnessing for Him at one place or another. What I

want us to do is to make every effort, even if it is beginning right now, to change to where we are truly committed to God and His way totally and wholly.

Whenever these things really begin to come home much more closely than they are now, somebody within the nation is going to be blamed. (Look at the accusations that are going on between the two people running for president, and the two groups that back each one of those groups.) Somebody is going to be blamed, it is human nature.

In this nation it is already being shown that *we* are being shown. The progressives, liberal media, are already blaming the police, and individual Christians. People holding Christian views are already being persecuted through American courts. I do not say that they are real Christians, but they do hold Christian views, and they are very sincere about what they are practicing. You can be certain from what Jesus says, the persecution will grow in intensity and history is clear. Christians have been, Christians are, and Christians will be patsies that the blame falls on.

The intensity of the persecutions will increase and become more widespread, and this is already written in God's Word, apprising us beforehand so that we will be prepared. Brethren, be thankful God is admonishing for purposes of preparing our minds. The key word for our purposes in this sermon is in verse 13. "He who endures [That makes a guy shudder.] to the end shall be saved."

Here is where we must begin. First, we must accept a biblical reality in our relationship with God. Because God is our Creator and He knows best where He is headed in His preparations for us in His Kingdom, mark this well. If He wants us to go through the tribulation even, that is His call. I am going to prove this to you much more thoroughly in the next sermon.

No Christian has an absolute promise for any of us, individually, that we will be taken to a place of safety. Do you understand that? So many of those groups out there say that you will be blown away somewhere and taken to a place of safety. I am not saying there is not a place of safety, there definitely is. But God, Jesus Christ, is our boss. He is the captain of our salvation, the general who is leading the army, and if He chooses us to have to go through that, then there is good reason both for us and His purpose. We have to accept that.

Revelation 2:9-10 "I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich) [How about that. That shows me that some of the people that He is going to send through the tribulation are rich spiritually.]; and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days, Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life."

There are times when God does not intervene, it is according to His purpose. We have the encouragement of times in the past, when God did intervene in such ways as to give total safety. We have these examples to give us encouragement, but this is a warning from Him that there are times, that for His purposes He does not.

What we have to do now is to prepare for *whatever* comes. God is still on His throne, He is still hearing our prayers, He wants us to be in His Kingdom, and therefore He will give us every aid that we need to glorify Him in whatever situation He wants us to endure to the end.