

TRIBULATION – Great Tribulation

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Is there anyone out there experiencing tribulation in their life? The Bible states in Daniel chapters 8-12, and in Revelation 12:6-14, that 7 years before Jesus returns to put an end to this world, that the world will begin to experience **Great Tribulation** (see 7 year timeline appendix in book **Revelation, Apostasy, End-Times & This Generation**, and also in the **Book of Chronology and Time Charts** @ Target Truth Ministries.com). Most people think that there is enough trouble in the world already, and can't imagine what a **Great Tribulation** would look like. The 7 year Great Tribulation will begin when the organized "church" no longer has influence in the nations of the world (Rev. 2-3 – note that the "church" is no longer mentioned after this, when the **Great Tribulation** occurs).

An example of this drift toward the Great Tribulation by nations can be seen in America. America was once a great Christian nation where the "church" had great influence in our nations' direction. No abortion because life begins at conception, and killing is a sin. No marriage outside a man and a woman, as that is embedded in God's creation (Gen. 2:21-24), and no divorce and remarriage (Matt. 19:9). No suicide or euthanasia, as life is precious and to be protected. In America today all these Christian positions are now ignored, and by law the government has legalized all these sins. The "church" is ignored and has no authority in our nation today.

The **Great Tribulation** will result when all the nations of the world ignore God and the "church" – see Rev. 2-3 where the churches are discussed and then after Revelation 3 the "church" is no longer mentioned as tribulation begins leading up to the arrival of Jesus (Rev. 19:11).

Are the "churches" teachings ignored in all the nations of the world today?

There are hundreds of nations in the world, but probably a good nation to monitor in relation to the arrival of this **Great Tribulation** period is God's chosen **Israel**. Is the nation of Israel (God's chosen), drifting away from the teachings of God? How does Israel's government today view abortion and marriage and euthanasia? Well, as of 2022, all three of these are similar to America. Abortion is legal in Israel as of 2022. Same sex unions are now recognized in Israel by the national government. Euthanasia has been expanded in Israel as well.

It may be possible that the world could actually be entering the beginning phases of the **Great Tribulation** right now...if soon all nations of the world no longer recognize God's authority, and adopt man's beliefs instead, as America and Israel have done.

Phase 1 would be **ignoring** the "church" (Rev.2-3) by all nations as the "church" is not mentioned after Rev. 3 when the Great Tribulation occurs. This ignoring of the church by all national governments will be the beginning of the **Great Tribulation**.

Phase 2 of the Great Tribulation will be openly **mocking** the "church" and God's teachings by all the nations of the world. A good example of this can be found in Americas education system today, where Darwin's "theory of evolution," and millions of years, are imbedded into our children's minds, which implies that what God says about creation is only a myth. Our children are adopting the government teachings...not God's Word. The "church" and God are therefore mocked in America. I wrote a book concerning the correct understanding of the teachings of science 20 years ago (and have updated it since), which shows how **provable** science actually supports creation and the Bible. Before I became a Christian my education was totally in science and math (see books **Science, Origins & Ancient Civilizations**, and also **Eden to Evil - the Two Creation Accounts** @ Target Truth Ministries.com). These teachings are of course mocked.

All throughout time, mankind has found a way to deny there is a God, and to elevate man. And, all throughout time **God has provided evidence of His existence**, whereas those who deny God have only “theories” and “speculation” and “traditions”—NO actual evidence.

Why Jesus? Why not Buddha, or Vishnu, or Muhammad, or the Mormon belief in becoming a god ourselves...or, the myriad of others? What did Jesus do that proves that He alone has power over life and death? Jesus rose from the dead. Jesus raised others from death, and then raised Himself from death. He lives today in His supernatural body, as well as all those resurrected at the time of His death - **Matt. 27:50-53**. No one else has ever shown power over death like Jesus. Jesus didn't just appear to His disciples and then go into His kingdom. No. Jesus spent weeks here on Earth, visiting with over 500 people, on many different occasions, to prove to doubting people that He truly is God, and that He has the power over death. Get a clue—this is for real! **1 Corinthians 15:1-8 and Acts 1:1-8**, give us an overview (a summary), of how Jesus stuck around here on planet earth and visited people after His death and resurrection. The New Testament are the books written by the eyewitnesses of Jesus' resurrection—their personal testimonies.

Truth can be determined in a court of law in any one of three ways. Any one of these ways is enough to convict someone in a court of law. The three ways to convict a person with truth are circumstantial evidence, physical evidence, or eyewitness evidence. For example, as **circumstantial evidence**...the twelve disciples of Jesus were afraid of dying and hiding out when Jesus was arrested. But, after Jesus rose from death and appeared to them, then they were ALL willing to die (**Luke 24**). An example of **physical evidence** is the empty tomb (by the way...it is still empty, and the Roman army who were guarding it spent weeks trying to find a body). Then there is the **eyewitness evidence** (**1 Corinthians 15:1-8**), where over 500 witnessed Jesus alive over several weeks after His death on the cross. When Paul wrote these Corinthian letters, most of these 500 witnesses were still alive to vouch for the truth of these events. **This is the Truth**...Jesus alone has the power over life and death. Jesus said in **John 14:6**, that He is the ONLY way to God's kingdom.

If a person is rational and thoughtful and searches for truth, they will ultimately find evidence for God's existence. Real evidence—the Bible...not just traditions or teachings from some government or king. Now, even if someone knows the truth, that person must submit and obey God—love the Creator, worship Him, or...remain separated from God forever. Many people never even explore or search for God. Most people blindly accept popular notions of evolution, or of aliens from another planet, and reject the thought that there may actually be a God that created all things. And further, that this God actually loves us, even though we rejected Him (see **Eden to Evil** @ Target Truth Ministries.com). Our God even went to the extreme of taking the form of flesh in order to die a bloody, painful death to pay for our penalty of death and separation from Him. A penalty which we deserve because we did exactly as Adam and Eve...we chose another way (**Gen. 3**). Yes, God loves us and paid our penalty of death to save those of us who would believe and trust in Him—Jesus.

Convicted yet? Do you believe there is a God? The evidence from history and science say yes. The traditions of mankind are to play dumb--trust in “theories” of evolution, and traditions including “aliens.” Even our government mandates that our school system teach “evolution” as “proven” science, even though everyone knows it is only “accepted” “*theoretical*” science. Yes, our own government's educational institutions lead our children into these false beliefs. Fortunately, people are not dumb—they are smart. Fortunately, many do search for truth and find it. But, evil is everywhere, and unfortunately many people fall prey to false assumptions like evolution, aliens, and so on. There is actually no evidence of macro-evolution, where one species changes into another species...this is only a theory (see book “**Science, Origins & Ancient Civilizations**” @ Target Truth Ministries.com). Many people when asked the question—Do you think there is a God?—respond...I don't know. Of course we don't know. We have fallen from God and Eden--paradise. We are sinners. This is only a problem when we don't make an effort to find the truth! We, just like the Egyptians, the Romans, and many others, have accepted the government's story of life. Shame on us!

How about you? Do you think there is a God? What evidence do you have for your conclusions? Even the Buddhist and Hindu, and Mormon faiths, which do not believe in any supreme God, must rely upon some evidence...or ignore evidence, and rely upon traditions--we've always done it this way. The irony is that many, many people do, in fact, deny evidence. Many people follow traditions, follow governments, or follow the latest trendy path or philosophy. Many

people willingly ignore historical evidence. The only real true evidence we have tells us that there actually is a God--the God of the Bible. The evidence is circumstantial, physical, eyewitness...anyone of which could convict a person in court. The evidence is overwhelming. However, God's Word--the Bible itself states, people are "*willingly ignorant*" (**2 Pet. 3:1-7** KJV). Are you relying upon evidence, or are you willingly ignorant...following the traditions of mankind? Do you believe there is a God? Are you "born again" as Jesus requires (**John 3:1-7**), or are you destined for death and separation forever from God? Please share your evidence with your family...your friends...your neighbors...and anyone who will listen. Truth is...there is only one way (**John 14:6**).

But wait...there is more. God goes even beyond the circumstantial, the physical, and the eyewitness evidence. Yes...beyond these evidences there are also many **prophecies** which have come true, which is **hard evidence** that we should trust the Bible...not dismiss it (see **Great Prophecies** @ Target Truth Ministries.com).

Also...there is a **prophecy for our time**...for our children's time - see **2068 Message** @ Target Truth Ministries.com! Let's look at a couple of prophecies from the past, and see how God gives us puzzles to explore...and how we might look at our time today, now that Jesus has come (as prophesized), and sacrificed Himself to save all of us who will trust in Him and be "born again" (**John 3:1-7**), as prophesized. Please note that **these prophecies have been verified by historians.**

Daniel 9:25-26 - For us a Decade means 10 years. For the Jewish people a Week in prophecy is interpreted as 7 years. This is a prophecy of the restoral of Jerusalem (which had been destroyed), and the arrival of the Messiah--the Savior. **Daniel 9:25** gives this prophecy of the 62 weeks and the 7 weeks that will need to pass before these things happen. In 1894, Sir Robert Anderson determined that this prophecy had been fulfilled exactly to the very day! **Neh. 2:1-8** refers to the decree of Artaxerxes (March 14th, 445 B.C.), which allowed Israel to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. From that decree we must go forward 69 (62 + 7), weeks of years, or 483 years. Remember what Jesus said in **Luke 16:31**--"*Listen to Moses and the prophets.*"

On April 6th, 32 A.D., Jesus was welcomed as a Messiah by the people on the first day of Passover as He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey **exactly** 69 weeks of years later--after the decree to rebuild the city! 173,880 days later, **exactly!** Jesus rode in on a donkey (the way kings and high priests would ride in that day). In **Luke 19:41-44**, Jesus remarked ..."*You did not recognize the time of your visitation*" -- meaning that the nation of Israel and its leaders did not recognize the fulfillment of this prophecy.

Another prophecy is in **Ezekiel 4:5-7** -- Dr. Chuck Missler in 1998 determined how this prophecy was fulfilled. Because of Israel's sin, this was the prophecy of Israel's siege and fall, and then... in time, their eventual restoral as a nation again. The prophecy calls for 390 days (years), and 40 days (years) of suffering without the Jewish people having a land of their own...a nation of Israel. 430 years total (in prophecy a day can equal a year). Beginning in 605 B.C., Israel was conquered by Babylon and was under their control for 70 years until the Romans conquered Babylon. Israel during this time (during this 70 years), failed to submit to God. Moses wrote what God said in the Torah in **Lev. 26:16-18**, that if Israel failed to submit to God, that their punishment would now be 7 times as much. There remained 360 years of punishment, and this period was now multiplied times 7. This means that Israel now faced **2,520 more years** of being in exile and without a country of their own. 907,200 days of suffering under another power. Remember what Jesus said in **Luke 16:31**--"*Listen to Moses and the prophets.*"

The Persian Cylinder of Cyrus, which is held in the London Museum, records the sieges of Israel and Jerusalem. And from the 1st siege of Israel (**2 Kings 24:1ff**), to the establishment of Israel as a nation again on May 14, 1948, this **exactly** fulfilled the 70 years, plus the 907,200 days--**exactly** to the very day! This prophecy, like Daniel's, was also **exactly** fulfilled to the very day!

I hope your convicted by now. I hope you are preparing. Because Jesus is prophesized to return to bring an end to this earth age and Satan's domain. Of course, Satan's plan is to convince us to ignore God, and ignore the Bible's prophecies. Satan's plan seems to be working in America.

Our schools in America today only mock God and “church.” The Bible was removed from our education system in the 1950’s and 1960’s. **Phase 2** will penetrate all the nations of the world someday in the future as government authorities replace God’s Word.

Phase 3 of the Great Tribulation and the elimination of the “church” will be actual **oppression** of the “church” (Rev. 17). Then, after **Phase 3**, Jesus will return (Rev. 18-19), and the end of the world will occur.

Now...back to the “church” being taken out of the world before the Great Tribulation of the end times...there are **two views** among Christians as to what this means. Does the “church” missing in scripture after Revelation 2-3 mean the organized “church” is not recognized any longer by nation’s governments, or does this mean all believers in Jesus as Lord and Savior will be taken into heaven at this time. Does the “rapture” (discussed next – the taking of all faithful Christians to heaven), occur before the Great Tribulation actually begins, or after the Great Tribulation? **Revelation 20:4-5** seems to indicate the “rapture” occurs at the very end...after the Great Tribulation. There are **two views** as to whether Christians will have to endure the **Great Tribulation** of the end times...these last 7 years (Dan. 8-12; Rev. 12:6-14).

One view, held by Pastor David Jeremiah of Shadow Mtn. Baptist Church in San Diego, California, and also by Pastor Robert Jeffers of First Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas (both with memberships of 10,000 plus), is that because the “church” is not mentioned after Revelation chapter 3, concerning the end times, they therefore assume the “Rapture” must have occurred before the Great Tribulation of the end times, and that the Christians will be in heaven and not have to endure the Great Tribulation to come.

The other view, held by me @ Target Truth Ministries.com, and many others as well, is that when the “church” is no longer referred to after Revelation chapter 3, that yes, the “church” as an “organization” is no longer an influence in our nations...BUT...that doesn’t mean that Christians are no longer here. Just the opposite! Christians will need to persevere even in the face of opposition just like Noah did up to the very last day (Genesis 6-7).

Let’s discuss this “**Rapture**” in more detail.

We exist in this age, on earth, in physical bodies, which lack any supernatural, eternal, spiritual quality, and so Jesus tells us that we must be “born again” (John 3:1-7; Rom. 8:8-11). That is, we must receive our eternal quality (our spirit), in order to be a whole person. And, only through Jesus can we receive that eternal spirit (John 14:6).

When we are born, we are flesh only...and our spirit, our eternal nature, is with God. For those “born again”... those who accept Jesus as Savior...those who have received their eternal spirit...at death our body and spirit are separated, until we are resurrected to our new supernatural body when Jesus returns (Eccl. 12:7 - see Study on Final States, or books Revelation, Apostasy, End-Times, & This Generation, or God’s Plan / Satan’s Plan, @ Target Truth Ministries.com). At death, we are asleep, at peace, awaiting our new supernatural bodies. Our spirit, which we joined together with when we were “born again” (John 3:1-7), returns to heaven, but is asleep, and at peace, awaiting the joining together with our resurrected supernatural body when Jesus returns (Eccl. 12:7; 1 Corin. 15:20-23; Rev. 20:4-6).

Those who do not accept Jesus, who are not born again, are limited in life. They are nice people perhaps, but remain separated from God. We all fall short of God’s will in this life, but those who are “born again” (John 3:1-7), those who trust in Christ, those who become whole persons, recognize how they fall short of God’s will, and will change to become more Christ like, which includes a concern for everyone’s eternal destiny.

Jesus said you must be “born again” to be in the kingdom to come (**John 3:1-7**). **Today, only 8% of Americans claim to be “born again.”** Does this mean that 92% of Americans are going to hell? YES ! According to Jesus and the Bible...yes !

Note, that in Revelation 19:11, Christ comes from heaven on the last day, and the judgment of this world takes place. On this final day (the Lord’s Day), **first** the wicked of those still living at Christ’s return, are judged (harvested – Matt.

13:24-30)...and **then** those “born again” from previous generations are resurrected (1 Thess. 4:13-17), and **then lastly**, those “born again” still living are “**raptured**,” and will serve with Christ in the millennium (1 Thess. 4:13-17). Those deceived who never heard the Gospel message of Jesus and are not saved, and those aborted who never heard the gospel of Jesus...all those who have not actually denied Christ, are selected (gleaned), from the harvest to go into the millennium (see Study on **Final States**, or books **Revelation, Apostasy, End-Times & This Generation**, or **God’s Plan / Satan’s Plan**, @ Target Truth Ministries.com)

An argument often made to support the idea of a “rapture” *before* the tribulation, is that Christ can come at any moment. While it is true that Christ can come at any moment (He is God, and can do whatever He determines), one will not find anywhere in Scripture that Christ will come at any moment. In fact, the opposite is true. There are references to Christ surprising those not awake, those not watchful (those un-believers), but no reference to the believers being surprised, or taken, before the tribulation (1 Thess. 4:13-17; Rev. 18:4, 23).

Let us define the Idea of “rapture.”

The Rapture “**event**” is that major event where those who trust in Christ will receive their new supernatural bodies, and join with Jesus for eternity. The new supernatural body appears physical in its form and substance, but is supernatural - eternal. This is the resurrection body, just as Jesus was resurrected (John 21:26-31) (see the **Angels & Humans** Study, or book **Eden to Evil** @ Target Truth Ministries.com).

The Rapture “**view**” is where Jesus supposedly returns *before* the tribulation (rather than at the end of the tribulation), to take all believers with Him, so they will not have to experience the tribulation. This view, while popular, I believe actually defies both Scripture and God’s promise. Consider this...if God’s **supposed** promise is to not allow believers to suffer the tribulation, then one must question why God would leave those who would hopefully become believers during the tribulation, to continue to endure the tribulation, until the Lord’s Day—the Last Day. Some have suggested that when the lost witness the “born again” Christians raptured to heaven and disappear, that will encourage the lost to also want to become “born again.” This sounds good, but without true Christians around to help them understand their sin nature and need for Jesus as Savior, and help them endure the tribulation and persecution, most, if not all, would fall short. Therefore, God will keep “born again” Christians around to help expand the numbers of saved beyond 8%.

It would appear that the Great Tribulation and the end of the world and the arrival of Jesus is soon to begin as **Phase 1** is in view right now (see **2068 Study** @ Target Truth Ministries.com).