

## **End Time Events V**

### **By Greg Rangel**

As we have mentioned through our previous articles, mostly everyone is interested in the end time events in one way or another. The same curiosity that prompted the disciples of the Lord to ask Him when shall be the sign of His coming and of the end of the world in Matthew 24 causes people today to ask the same questions today.

Some of the previous signs that we have already dealt with have been false Christ's and false prophets, wars and rumors of wars, famines, pestilences and earthquakes in different places. Some of the other signs that Jesus speaks about in Matthew 24 are persecutions and betrayals. Jesus said *"Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another"* (Matt. 24:9-10).

The persecution of Christians has always taken place. Jesus said in John 16:33 that *"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."* Whether we like it or not, persecution because of our faith has taken place since the book of Acts and it continues on up through today as well. There are many Christians in third world countries that are being killed because they believe in Jesus.

As you study church history, you will see that the Apostles with the exception of one got afflicted and killed for their faith. Some of the disciples were decapitated, others were crucified. Others were tortured and burned at the stake. Others were thrown to hungry lions.

Persecution takes place against Christians because we believe in Jesus. Jesus also said that *"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you"* (John 15:18-19). Unfortunately for us, we don't understand much of how tribulations work for our benefit because we Christians in the United States are not being persecuted and killed for our faith. But biblically, tribulations work for our benefit (See Romans 5:1-4, James 1:2-4). The Greek word that is used in the New Testament for patience, which we get by going through tribulations is *"hupomone"* which means endurance. So tribulation works patience. That is, it produces the ability to resist during great opposition and obstacles. And the Greek word that is used for experience in Romans 4 is *"Dokime"* which means testing to see if it is genuine. This word is used when precious metals are tested to see if they are genuine or not. Tribulations work the same way in our life. Through tribulations we are tested to see if we are genuine or if we are

fake. For that reason Peter wrote *"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, thou it be tried with fire, might be found unot praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ"* (1 Peter 1:7).

Allow me to ask you what your faith is made of? Will you be able to resist during difficult times? Will you have the ability to resist during great opposition and trials and during great persecutions?

I believe you can answer the question by seeing how you live, by seeing what you dedicate yourself to when you are not at church. Also by what occupies your mind and your heart. If your faith is genuine, then you will be able to resist during great times of tribulations and persecutions. And if the day comes in which you must choose to either die for Jesus or deny Him and live, most likely you will choose to die for Him. But if your faith is not genuine, then you are one of these fake Christians that has a life full of compromises and lives the same way the unbeliever lives. And unfortunately for you, when tribulations and persecutions come your way, you will have no problem denying the Lord.

Persecutions is indeed one of the signs of the last days as Jesus said in Matthew 24. Many of our Christian brothers and sisters are being killed in third world countries.

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