

Are You Ready for End-Times Persecution?

According to global statistics, over 200 million followers of Yeshua are undergoing high levels of persecution today—primarily in the Middle East, Asia and Africa. But, I believe the Scriptures teach that the time is coming when such persecution will be the norm in every country of the earth.

When I was a new believer in my early 20s, a leader in my life spoke prophetically over me: “Cody, go deep in God’s Word *now*, because there will be a time in the future where it will be taken away from you, probably because you will be put in prison for your faith.” What an encouraging word for a new believer, right? I took that word seriously and have continued to devote much time to meditating in God’s Word almost daily for the past decade.

Heart Training

As I study the end times, one of the themes that continues to catch my attention is that of persecution. More and more in my quiet times, I have been picturing myself being arrested, beaten, put in prison and even martyred for my faith. I am training my heart now to walk in love for Yeshua and stand up for my faith when those times of extreme pressure come.

My sense is that this heart posture is almost nonexistent in most of the Western church today. Even If you and I don’t end up facing high levels of persecution, I believe it is wise to prepare our hearts, and the next generation, for what is coming.

What Is Coming?

So what should we be preparing for? Here are some Scriptures I have been meditating on:

- “But before all these things [read the preceding verses: false Messiahs, wars, great earthquakes, famines, pestilences, fearful sights], they will seize and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons” (Luke 21:12a). If you think you will get raptured out before persecution and trouble come, you will be in for a big shock.
- Luke 21:16 warns us that biological and spiritual family and friends will betray us and put some to death.
- “You will be hated by all for My name’s sake” (Luke 21:17). Consider this word: “all.” Atheists, people of other religions and humanistic, secular society may tolerate us at some level today, but this tolerance won’t last forever. Are you ready to be hated by all?
- “They will put you out of the synagogues. Yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he is offering a service to God” (John 16:2). The deception will be so deep that people will think they are doing God’s will by killing us.
- Before Yeshua returns, new laws will be passed against believers, rendering us criminals in the eyes of the world. Calling the nations to turn from their sins and not budging on Yeshua being the only way to God will be seen as major obstacles to global peace. Because lawlessness will abound and the love of many will grow cold, we should not expect human help or mercy when attacked, but instead the plundering of our possessions, major lies and attacks through media, lawsuits, fines and imprisonments (Isa. 24:5-6, Matt 24:12, Heb 10:34).
- The Antichrist will be granted to make war with the saints and overcome (Dan. 8:23-25, Rev 13:7). I believe prophetic patterns in Scripture like in Esther 3 and Daniel 3 where laws were passed forcing people into false worship and the destruction of the Jewish people

will emerge again before Yeshua returns.

- “As it was in the days of Noah and Lot, so it will be also be in the days of the Son of Man” (Luke 17:26; see Luke 17:26-30). The wickedness, violence and sexual perversion seen in the days of Noah and Lots are rampant again today and will continue to be directed against believers in an ever-increasing way (Gen. 6, 19).

One day, Jews and Christians will be the most hated people on the earth. But do not despair about the future; there is good news! The greatest outpouring of the Holy Spirit and harvest of souls will be happening simultaneously with this global persecution (Acts 2:17). There will be a remnant of faithful believers in every nation who will obey God over man (Acts 5:29) and not love their lives unto death (Rev. 12:11).

Lord, help us to apply Yeshua’s exhortation to watch and pray always, that we would be strengthened to resist compromise, sin and fear (Luke 21:36).

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