

Prepare Yourself, the World Will Hate You

“Jesus loved the people we hate,” the recent Super Bowl-video concluded, before posting the sponsoring “He Gets Us” campaign website.

Opinion pages, liberal websites and even leftist politicians reacted with their fake offense at the perceived repugnant “agenda” of these religious sponsors—as if none of the other commercials had agendas!

So much for “free speech.”

Jesus Warned

Jesus warned that human-hatred will be indicative of the generation when He returns—especially hatred aimed at His followers. In Matthew 24:9, Jesus confided to the disciples that before He will return to establish His rule and reign over this earth, “all nations will hate you.”

The word translated in English as “nations” is the Greek word “ethnon.” It does not refer to the 193 member states of the United Nations. Rather, the use of the cognitive word of “ethnos” here more likely speaks of “ethnicities” or people groups. Non-followers of Jesus will eventually, actively hate His followers. All who are true to His words and ways will suffer.

Pains, Persecution and Plagues

We read in the preceding verses (24:5-8) of prophesied birth-pains, persecution and plagues which will affect all people groups, as context for our Lord’s ominous warning of the world’s hatred:

“For many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Messiah,’

and will deceive many. You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains. Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me" (NIV).

Trials, Troubles and Tribulation

Jesus taught that these personal trials and public troubles "must happen, but the end is still to come." In verse 9 (Matt. 24), where He warned us of being hated "because of me," we also note that we must even be prepared to be "handed over to be persecuted and put to death."

Persecution because of our faith may come our way today (John 16:33). Paul warned Timothy that "everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted," (2 Tim. 3:12). These trials and troubles may even elevate to the status of tribulation for those followers of our Lord who "endure to the end."

There is a difference in the repetitive times of trials, troubles and tribulations we all may face and the "great tribulation," which Jesus warns of in later verses of Matthew 24:

"For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will again. And if those days had not been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect, those days will be cut short" (NASB).

The End-Times Events

The shortened days may reflect the sudden appearance of our Lord and His angels to "gather his elect" (Matt. 24:30-31; 1

Thess. 4:15-17; 2 Thess. 2:1-12). The word rapture is never used in English translations of Scripture.

The significant end-times events have to do with the prophesied Antichrist, False Prophet, one-world government and the mark of the beast, (Rev. 13, 16). They will involve the predicted Two Witnesses (Rev. 11), the progressive releasing of prophetic seals (Ch. 6), trumpets (Ch. 8 and 9) and bowls of God's wrath (Ch. 16). The final warfare will see armies assembled at Armageddon from around the world to fight against Christ at His Second Coming (Ch. 19), and more!

Saints will reign with Christ on earth "for a thousand years," after which the imprisoned Satan will be thrown into the "...lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever" (Rev 20:7-10).

 Then a new heaven will come down from heaven, where God the Father will dwell in "the holy city," the "new Jerusalem," on a new earth and Jesus the Conqueror will have us as His "heritage" forever in that Holy City (Rev. 21, 22).

Jesus concludes His extensive end-times Revelation by proclaiming, "Surely, I am coming soon" (Rev. 22:20). And we can join with John the Revelator to say, "Amen. Come Lord Jesus!" {eoa}

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