

GREAT TRIBULATION

The angel Gabriel called it *"a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same."* Daniel 12:1 Jesus speaks of the same event as a time of *"affliction,"* saying, *"For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be."* Mark 13:19 Gabriel said in this time there would be deliverance for those who are *"found written in the book."* These are those who *"look upon"* and *"mourn for"* Jesus *"whom they have pierced."* Zechariah 12:10 Gabriel also said this time would bring the *"resurrection of the dead,"* Daniel 12:2 which coincides with the return of Jesus Christ to destroy those who fight against Jerusalem. Zechariah 12:9; 14:3-4 Gabriel was purposely vague in his description, but Jesus Christ spoke clearly about this time of *"Great Tribulation"* in Matthew 24:21-27. As we examine His words, notice that he said nothing about *"The Antichrist,"* a *"treaty with the Jews,"* a *"rebuilt temple,"* or anything that even resembles the modern *"doctrine"* of *"The Great Tribulation."* Instead, Jesus foretold two great *"afflictions"* by which we will recognize the time that is upon us.

AFFLICTION 1. *"For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."* Matthew 24:21-22 The first *"affliction"* is the greatest slaughter of human life the world has ever seen. One third of all living will be slain by the *"locust army"* of two hundred million that is formed as the four angels that were bound in the Euphrates River are loosed. Revelation 9:13-18 Even now this army is being gathered in the name of radical Islam. Two thirds of the inhabitants of Israel will be *"cut off and die,"* Zechariah 13:8 and of those nations that fight against Jerusalem, only one sixth of their population will remain. Ezekiel 39:2

AFFLICTION 2. *"Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."* Matthew 24:23-24 Jesus began describing this next *"affliction"* by warning of those who will seek to persuade believers of a secret coming of Christ. They will be saying, *"He is in the desert,"* or *"He is in the secret chambers."* Those who have placed all their hope on the belief that Christ would rapture them before this time of great *"affliction"* will be the target of this deception. Remember, it is in this time of *"affliction"* that the *"very elect"* are in danger of being deceived.

This *"affliction"* will be marked by the arising of *"false Christs and false prophets."* It is easy for our minds to go to Jim Jones, David Koresh, and other cult leaders of our generation who were false prophets and forerunners of the *"false Christs."* These, however, were so far out of the mainstream that they affected very few. Consider that several of the most popular *"faith ministers"* of this generation teach that we are *"The Christs"* for this generation exactly as Jesus was for His. These are the real forerunners for what is coming.

Peter said the last days would be marked by *"false teachers."* II Peter 2:1-3 We are living in the days when the

"prophets" Jesus warned of will come by the hundreds. There were 850 prophets in Israel in the days of Elijah, all of them false. Elijah stood alone at Mount Carmel against 450 prophets of Baal, yet God was with Elijah. Being many is not the same as being true. It is not a multitude of prophets that we need, but we desperately need men and women who *"know God"* Daniel 11:32 and bring the *"testimony of Jesus,"* that he is the Christ who came into the world to *"make an end of sin"* in everyone who trusts in him. Daniel 9: 24-25 This is the true *"testimony of Jesus"* which is *"the spirit of prophecy."* Rev. 19:10

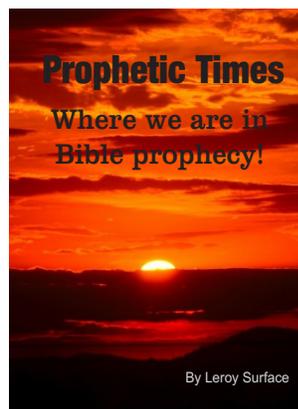
Prophets are not ordained by churches or mentored by men: they are *"made by God."* God said, *"If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream."* Numbers 12:6-8 As a young man, I read Leonard Ravenhill's *"Picture of a Prophet"* and wept before God, pleading, *"please send us prophets."* About two years ago I read it again and this time wept before God with a different plea, *"Please deliver us from those who are trying to be prophets."*

The Pentecostal revival was destroyed after half a century by those who came teaching the people how to speak in tongues. A decade later they began teaching the people how to prophesy. Today they are teaching people how to be prophets. They do not know it, but they are bringing us to that *"great and terrible day of the Lord,"* Revelation 16:14 which Jesus defined so well. On one hand we have the *"locust army"* of 200,000,000 coming, which will slay one third of all living. More to be feared than that is the multitude of prophets arising, who are being raised up, not by God, but by the carnality that has destroyed every true move of God in the past. These are the identifying marks which Jesus gave us of *"Great Tribulation"* that is coming on this generation. The first may destroy your body if you reject them, but the second will destroy your soul if you believe them. Please do not take lightly what I say.

Matthew 24:25-27: *"Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."*

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