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Suffering for Jesus in the End Times



By Steven J. Hogan

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When you study the major prophecy passages, one thing that stands out is that God talks about suffering in every single one of them. Why is that? Because God wants us to know about this suffering, this end-time's persecution of the saints. Because Christians will be going through a lot more suffering the closer we get to Christ's return and the rapture of the church. Because God wants us to be ready, and not be caught off guard. In this post I will summarize what these passages

have to say about suffering:

Matthew 24:3-41 (Suffering – Matthew 24:9-11, 15-22, 28, 29)
* The suffering spoken of here begins at the midpoint of Daniel's 70th week (when the Antichrist is revealed), and continues until the end of the age. Matthew 24:15-29
* This suffering starts with the Jewish people in Jerusalem, and then spreads out and affects Christians all over the world. Matthew 24:9-22, Revelation 12:13-17
* This suffering is related to great tribulation. It is great in scope in that it is worldwide, and in severity, for a great number of believers will be martyred. Matthew 24:9, 21, 29
* Our primary purpose during this time is to be preaching the gospel. Matthew 24:14
* Christians enduring to the end will be saved (raptured and glorified). Matthew 24:13, 31, 40-41

Luke 21:5-36 (Suffering – Luke 21:12-19, 20-24)
* The suffering that affects Christians starts at the beginning of the church age, and continues on until the redemption (rapture) of the church. Luke 21:12, 27-28
* The Jewish people will be greatly persecuted, starting around 70 AD and continuing on until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled at the end of the age. Luke 21:20-24, 19:43-44, 23:28-31
* The enemies of the Christians are religious and governmental in nature. Luke 21:12
* One of the most difficult aspects of this persecution is that Christians will be betrayed by their own parents, brothers, sisters, relatives and friends. Luke 21:16
* This persecution will lead to opportunities for Christians to share their testimony and proclaim the gospel. God will *"give you utterance and wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute."* Luke 21:13-15
* Remember, it's all about Jesus, and it's for His name's sake that you suffer. Luke 21:12

Mark 13:1-37 (Suffering – Mark 13:9-13, 14-20)
* This prophecy passage is very similar to what we read in Matthew 24, but also contains elements from the Luke 21 passage.
* The suffering focuses on the end-times, particularly that which starts at the midpoint of Daniel's 70th week, and which affects both Jews and Christians. Mark 13:9-20
* A whole world of unbelievers will hate the Christians, wanting to put them to death (Mark 13:13). We learn, like in Luke 21, that believers will be betrayed by their own family members – brother against brother, parents against children, and children against parents. Mark 13:12
* *"Take heed; behold, I have told you everything in advance"* (Mark 13:23). God tells us this ahead of time, for He doesn't want us to be surprised that we will suffer greatly in the end-times, and that many will be martyred.

2 Thessalonians 1:3-10 (Suffering – 2 Thessalonians 1:4-7)
* This persecution, this affliction (tribulation), is what the early churches experienced and what all Christians will go through – and it will continue right up until the end of the age, when Christ is revealed and the church is raptured and glorified. 2 Thessalonians 1:7, 10; Acts 14:22
* This end-time's persecution and suffering will last only a short time, for Jesus, your Savior and King, will return and give you relief, and eternal rest. 2 Thessalonians 1:7, Revelation 14:13
* These verses keep things in perspective, for you realize that you may suffer a little while on earth, but the unsaved will suffer forever in hell, paying *"the penalty of eternal destruction."* Because of the love of God and the sacrifice of Christ, you will not receive the punishment you deserve, but instead, you will be blessed forever. Revelation 21-22

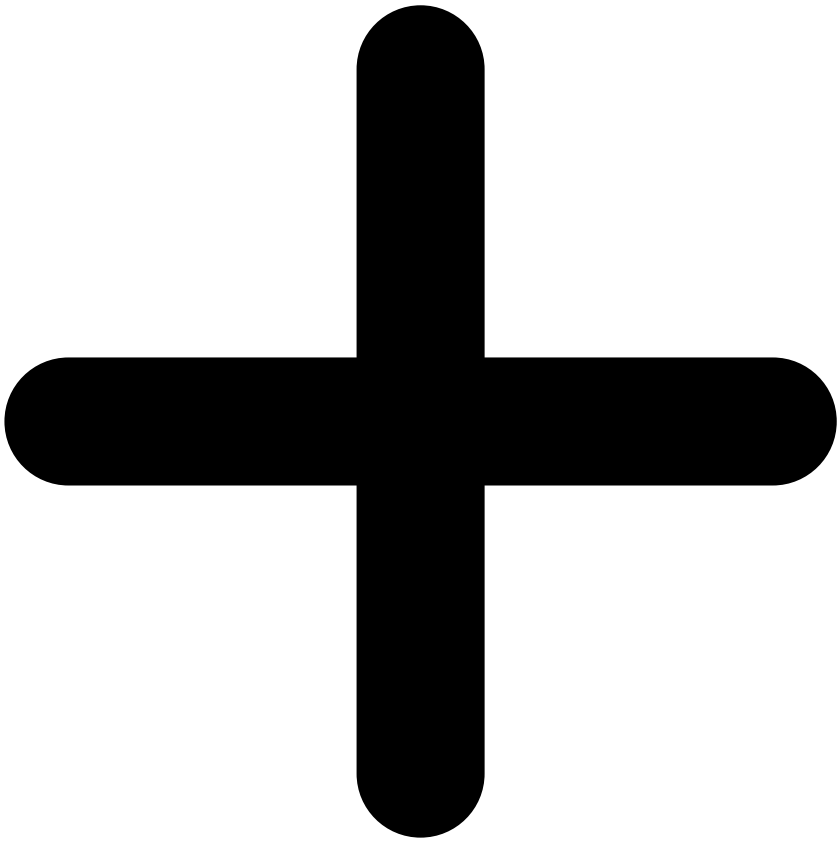
Revelation 6:1-17 (Suffering – Revelation 6:8-11)
* The fifth seal speaks about martyrdom, the climax and conclusion of suffering for some, for their suffering is over, and then they go to heaven to be with Jesus.
* End-times' martyrs will be wondering how long it will be before those who murdered them will get justice. The sixth seal signals that this

suffering is all over, and that it's time for God's wrath to be poured out upon the unbelievers still on earth. Revelation 6:12-17
* God is sovereign over suffering. He already knows who will be killed, who will die for Him. You need not worry, for your heavenly Father is in charge, and He knows what He is doing, for your eternal good, and for His eternal purposes and glory. Revelation 6:11

Revelation 13 (Suffering – Revelation 13:7, 10, 17)
* The beast, the Antichrist, will *"make war with the saints,"* and overcome many of them. This may sound sad and tragic, but it is God's will, and in the end, God will crush the Antichrist, getting a complete and decisive victory over him. Revelation 13:7, 19:19-21
* Christians need to persevere, and trust in God, knowing that He is good and holy, and that Christ will return to rescue them, and then be greatly glorified. Revelation 13:10, 7:9-14, 19:1-7

What God tells you about this end-time's suffering is the truth, what He wants you to know, and what you need to know. Remember Jesus' words: *"Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you and falsely say all kinds evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great."* Matthew 5:10-12

P.S. As Christians, we must not sugar coat the truth. Here is what God tells us, *"For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps."* Here are two more must reads on suffering: "Christians Go Through Tribulation" and "Christians Will Go Through Great Tribulation."



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