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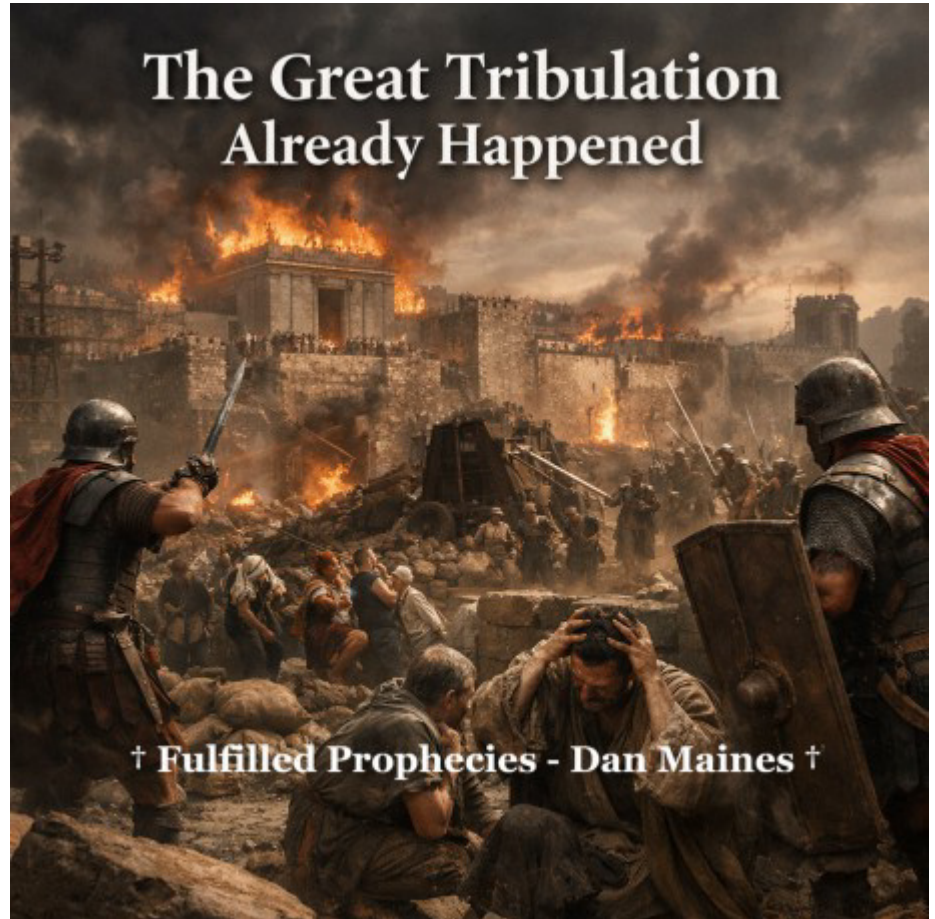
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## Tribulation - The Great Tribulation Already Happened



By Dan Maines

## The Great Tribulation Already Happened

### Introduction

† The Bible doesn't leave the Great Tribulation as some vague future event, it's defined clearly and placed in a specific time and covenant context.

† When we let Scripture interpret Scripture, and then compare it with recorded history, it becomes undeniable that this tribulation

already took place in the first century.

† We'll look at what Jesus said, what Daniel prophesied, and what history confirms about the destruction of Jerusalem.

### **Matthew 23:35**

so that upon you will fall the guilt of all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar.

† Jesus places all covenant guilt on that generation, making their judgment uniquely severe (Matthew 23:35).

† This explains why the tribulation was unlike any other, it was the full weight of covenant judgment.

† This matches the unmatched language of Matthew 24:21.

### **Matthew 23:36**

Truly I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

† Jesus already declared judgment on that generation before Matthew 24 even begins, this sets the context (Matthew 23:36).

† The tribulation of Matthew 24 is the direct continuation of this judgment.

† This proves the audience and timing never changed between chapters.

### **Matthew 24:21**

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.

† Jesus says this tribulation would be unlike anything before it and never repeated again, that immediately rules out any future global event repeating the same level (Matthew 24:21).

† He also places this in the lifetime of His audience just a few verses later, saying their generation would not pass until all these things happened (Matthew 24:34).

† This isn't open ended or symbolic timing, it's a direct time statement tied to the disciples standing there listening to Him.

## **Daniel 12:1**

Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued.

† Daniel describes the same event, a time of trouble unmatched in history, using the same language Jesus later uses (Daniel 12:1).

† Notice this tribulation is tied to your people, meaning Israel, not the entire globe, it's covenant judgment on the nation (Daniel 12:1).

† Jesus is directly applying Daniel's prophecy to the events leading up to Jerusalem's destruction, not something thousands of years later.

## **Matthew 24:15**

Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place, let the reader understand,

† Jesus explicitly tells them to look for Daniel's prophecy being fulfilled in their lifetime, not thousands of years later (Matthew 24:15).

† This proves Matthew 24 and Daniel 12 are not separate events, they are the same tribulation.

† If Daniel's tribulation is fulfilled when they see it, then it had to happen in their generation.

### **Matthew 24:34**

Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.

† Jesus locks the timing down, this generation, not a future one thousands of years removed (Matthew 24:34).

† If we take His words plainly, the tribulation had to occur within about 40 years, and that's exactly what happened in AD 70.

† Changing generation to mean something else is what creates confusion, but Scripture never redefines the word.

### **Matthew 10:23**

But whenever they persecute you in one city, flee to the next; for truly I say to you, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel until the Son of Man comes.

† Jesus tells His disciples they would not finish going through Israel before His coming, placing fulfillment in their lifetime

(Matthew 10:23).

† This supports the same timing as Matthew 24.

† It reinforces that the tribulation and coming are not future events.

### **Luke 21:20-22**

But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is near. Then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains, and those who are inside the city must leave, and those who are in the country must not enter the city, because these are days of punishment, so that all things which have been written will be fulfilled.

† Luke removes all symbolism and tells you plainly, the tribulation is the Roman army surrounding Jerusalem (Luke 21:20).

† Jesus calls it days of punishment, meaning covenant judgment for breaking the Law (Leviticus 26:31-33).

† He says all things written would be fulfilled in that event, that includes Daniel 12.

### **Luke 19:43-44**

For the days will come upon you when your enemies will put up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side, and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.

† Jesus foretells the exact siege conditions that happened in AD 70 (Luke 19:43-44).

† This matches Luke 21 and confirms the tribulation is the Roman destruction.

† This was judgment for rejecting Him.

### **Jeremiah 30:7**

Woe, for that day is great, there is none like it; And it is the time of Jacob's distress, Yet he will be saved from it.

† Jeremiah describes the same unmatched trouble for Jacob, confirming it's Israel focused, not global (Jeremiah 30:7).

† This matches Daniel 12:1 and Matthew 24:21 perfectly.

† This shows a consistent prophetic theme fulfilled in the first century.

### **Leviticus 26:31-33**

I will also make your cities a waste and bring your sanctuaries to desolation, and I will not smell your soothing aromas. And I will make the land desolate so that your enemies who settle in it will be appalled over it. You, however, I will scatter among the nations, and I will draw out a sword after you, as your land becomes desolate and your cities become waste.

† This is exactly what happened in AD 70, cities destroyed, sanctuary desolated, people scattered (Leviticus 26:31-33).

† The Great Tribulation wasn't random, it was covenant curses being fully executed.

† This ties Jesus' words directly back to the Law, showing continuity, not a new future event.

## **Hebrews 8:13**

When He said, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is about to disappear.

† The old covenant was about to vanish in their time, pointing directly to AD 70 (Hebrews 8:13).

† This connects the tribulation with the removal of the old system.

† The destruction of the temple completed this process.

## **1 Peter 4:7**

The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer.

† Peter says the end was near, not thousands of years away (1 Peter 4:7).

† This aligns with Jesus' timeline and confirms first century fulfillment.

† The end here is the end of the old covenant system, not the physical planet.

## **Revelation 1:1**

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants the things which must soon take place; and He communicated them by His angel to His bond-servant John.

† Soon means soon, not thousands of years later (Revelation 1:1).

† This confirms Revelation describes the same first century events.

† The tribulation in Revelation matches the destruction of Jerusalem.

## **Historical References**

† Josephus recorded famine so severe that people resorted to cannibalism during the siege of Jerusalem (Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book 6).

† Over a million Jews perished and the temple was destroyed, ending the old covenant system (Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book 6).

† The city was surrounded and crushed by Roman armies under Titus, exactly as Jesus warned (Luke 21:20).

† Josephus wrote that the suffering in Jerusalem was so great that no other city had ever endured such misery, confirming Jesus' statement (Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book 6).

† He describes entire families starving, bodies piling up in the streets, and internal civil war inside the city.

† The temple stones were torn apart, fulfilling Jesus' words that not one stone would be left upon another (Matthew 24:2).

† Eusebius recorded that Christians fled Jerusalem before the destruction, remembering Jesus' warning (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book 3).

† This shows the early church did not expect a future tribulation, they recognized it in their generation.

† This was the complete end of the covenant world centered in Jerusalem.

## **How It Applies To Us Today**

† We're not waiting for a future Great Tribulation, it's already been fulfilled exactly as Jesus said.

† This confirms we can trust every word Christ spoke, His timing was precise and true.

† It frees us from fear driven end times teaching that constantly pushes judgment into our future.

† If the Great Tribulation already happened, then fear based end times teaching collapses immediately.

† We're living in the fulfilled kingdom reality, not in anticipation of a coming tribulation.

† This shifts our focus from fear of destruction to confidence in fulfillment.

## **Q & A Appendix**

**Q:** Was the Great Tribulation worldwide?

**A:** No, it was focused on Israel and Jerusalem as Daniel said, your people, and Jesus confirmed it in the context of Judea (Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:16).

**Q:** Could something worse happen in the future?

**A:** No, Jesus said it would never be equaled again, that rules out any future tribulation surpassing it (Matthew 24:21).

**Q:** Why was it so severe?

**A:** Because it was covenant judgment, the final end of the old

covenant system centered in the temple (Hebrews 8:13).

**Q:** What about Revelation, isn't the tribulation there?

**A:** Revelation was written about things which must soon take place, placing its fulfillment in the same first century judgment (Revelation 1:1).

**Q:** Why do people still expect a future tribulation?

**A:** Because they ignore Jesus' time statement and separate Matthew 24 from Daniel 12.

**Q:** Was this really the worst event in history?

**A:** Yes, both Jesus and Josephus confirm it was unmatched and would never be repeated (Matthew 24:21).

**Q:** Is the tribulation tied to the temple?

**A:** Yes, it centers on the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple system (Luke 21:20; Hebrews 8:13).

**Q:** Did the apostles expect it soon?

**A:** Yes, they repeatedly said it was near and at hand (1 Peter 4:7; Revelation 1:1).

**Q:** Why can't this be future?

**A:** Because Jesus clearly said it would happen in that generation and never be repeated (Matthew 24:21, 34).

**Q:** Who specifically experienced the Great Tribulation?

**A:** Jesus said it would come upon that generation, and Luke shows it was those in Judea and Jerusalem who experienced it (Matthew 23:36; Luke 21:20-22).

**Q:** What caused the Great Tribulation?

**A:** It was judgment for rejecting Christ and shedding righteous blood, as Jesus declared (Matthew 23:35-36).

**Q:** Why does Daniel say your people?

**A:** Because the tribulation was covenant judgment on Israel, not the entire world (Daniel 12:1).

**Q:** What does abomination of desolation refer to?

**A:** It refers to the Roman armies surrounding and defiling Jerusalem, as Luke explains plainly (Matthew 24:15; Luke 21:20).

**Q:** Did Jesus give a sign to escape?

**A:** Yes, when they saw Jerusalem surrounded by armies, they were to flee immediately (Luke 21:20-21).

**Q:** Did believers actually escape?

**A:** Yes, early historical records show Christians fled before the destruction (Luke 21:20-21).

**Q:** What ended at the Great Tribulation?

**A:** The old covenant system and temple-centered worship came to an end (Hebrews 8:13).

**Q:** Why was the temple destroyed?

**A:** Because it had become obsolete under the new covenant and was under judgment (Hebrews 8:13).

**Q:** Does this mean prophecy is already fulfilled?

**A:** Yes, Jesus said all things written would be fulfilled in those days (Luke 21:22).

**Q:** What does days of punishment mean?

**A:** It refers to covenant judgment for breaking the Law, as warned in the Old Testament (Luke 21:22; Leviticus 26:31-33).

**Q:** Why do people connect this to the end of the world?

**A:** Because they misunderstand covenant language and assume it refers to the physical planet instead of Israel's

covenant world.

**Q:** Did the apostles teach a future tribulation?

**A:** No, they consistently said these events were near in their time (1 Peter 4:7; Revelation 1:1).

**Q:** What does soon take place mean in Revelation?

**A:** It means the events were about to happen in that generation, not thousands of years later (Revelation 1:1).

**Q:** Is there any prophecy left about a tribulation?

**A:** No, Jesus said it would never be repeated, meaning it is fully complete (Matthew 24:21).

**Q:** What was rescued in Daniel 12:1?

**A:** The faithful remnant written in the book, those who trusted in Christ (Daniel 12:1).

**Q:** How do we know this was not symbolic only?

**A:** Because real historical events match the exact details Jesus and the prophets described (Luke 21:20; Josephus, Wars of the Jews).

**Q:** What role did Rome play?

**A:** Rome was the instrument God used to carry out covenant judgment on Jerusalem (Luke 19:43-44).

**Q:** Why is this important to understand?

**A:** Because it removes confusion about end times and anchors prophecy in fulfilled history (Matthew 24:34).

**Q:** What should believers focus on now?

**A:** Living in the fulfilled kingdom reality Christ established, not fearing a future tribulation.

**† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †**

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## Source Index

† Matthew 23:35-36; Matthew 24:2, 15, 21, 34; Matthew 10:23; Daniel 12:1; Luke 19:43-44; Luke 21:20-22; Jeremiah 30:7; Leviticus 26:31-33; Hebrews 8:13; 1 Peter 4:7; Revelation 1:1  
† Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book 6; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book 3

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