



"The Last Days" Series, Message 5 – November 8, 2009 – Pastor Will Mackey

Jesus' Second Return to Earth: Six Signs Of His Coming! (Part 4)

Review:

5. (Heaven's Seal and Earth's Sign) There will be unprecedented religious persecution on those who follow Jesus. (Rev. 6:9-11; Matt. 24:9, 21-22; Luke 21:12-19)

Three Things Will Lead To This Level of Persecution.

- An increase in powerful spiritual deception (Matt. 24:5, 23-24)
- A great number of people will abandon the faith (Matt. 24:10, 12-13; 2 Peter 3:3-4, 9; 2Tim. 3:1-5)

Today's Message:

- The rise to power of the anti-Christ
 1. He will be a political leader who rises to the world stage. (Daniel 9:27a)
 2. After 3 ½ years of leadership he will take over God's Temple (in Jerusalem), defile it and establish it as the seat of his power. (Daniel 9:27; 12:12; 2 Thess. 2:1-4, 8-10)
 3. At this time, he will concentrate his wrath on those who worship the True God. (Rev. 13:5-7, 10, Matt. 24:15-22)

Why Does God Allow His People To Suffer?

- Suffering is a normal characteristic of living in God's Kingdom. (Acts 14:22)
- God allows suffering so we will learn to trust in Him and not in ourselves. (2 Cor. 1:8-9)

- God allows suffering in order to bring humility to our lives and to train us in how to live lives dependent upon God's power. (2 Cor. 12:7-10)
- God allows suffering in order to mature our character and develop our spiritual perseverance. (James 1:2-4; Rom. 5:3-4)
- God allows suffering to act as a pruning agent to remove those things which hinder us from bearing spiritual fruit. (John 15:1-2, 4-5)
- God allows suffering in order to test our faith to see if it is saving faith. (James 1:12)
- God allows suffering so we learn to identify with the pain of others and learn how to bring comfort to them. (2 Cor. 1:3-5)
- God allows suffering to punish and discipline His people for sinning. (Hebrews 12:4-11; Gal. 6:7)
- If we suffer because of our love for Him, it is a blessed privilege to be associated with His Name and Nature. (1Pet. 4:14; Acts 5:41)
- God allows us to suffer in order to advance His work among the unsaved by showing His Life and His Power through us as we live victoriously through the suffering. (Phil. 1:12-13; Col. 1:24)

Our Proper Response:

- This is what we signed up for.
- We should not get angry with God.
- We must take our eyes off the world and its evaluation of it.
- We should praise Him for the privilege of suffering for His sake and for the investment He is making in us.
- We should fully cooperate with what God wants to do through our suffering.