

On Worrying About the Date Of The Tribulation

45 "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? 46 Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.

Matthew 24:45-46 (NKJV)

The knowledge of the time of the start of the Tribulation is not meant for the disruption of our lives or for dereliction of duty in any way. It is only to encourage those who are awake to double down on their efforts to finish their duties in preparation for the return of their Master because the start of the Tribulation is nothing more than a seven-year countdown to our God's return.

We are not called to disrupt our lives, make unusual choices, or essentially enter some kind of panicked or waiting mode, paralyzed by ignorance of the details of the unfolding of the Tribulation or by fear of the upheavals that the period appears to promise. Rather, we are called to be even more disciplined and more focused than we have ever been to complete our duties or at least to be found in the middle of our duties when our Master returns.

The Tribulation is still part of human history even if it is the darkest part of the night. Regardless of the spiritual changes that will occur, life will still largely carry on as it always did. For one thing, we will still need to earn a living as we always have. Even when the economy will be designed to lock out believers, for example, the Bible is clear that believers will still be engaged in economic activity at the moment of our Lord's return three years after the most horrible and pervasive persecution of believers in all of history begins. As long too as there are believers of the Church Age in this world, spiritual ministry will persist. Family life will continue too. People will still travel as well.

There is a reason for this. Barring the total destruction of the human race, there is no possibility of erasing human life in all of its expressions. This is what God has ordained that Satan simply cannot change. Economic activity is, by definition, a corporate affair. No one can do everything that is required to sustain human life, so people must trade their skills and productions with each other for the human race to survive, and the drive to survive is very high in human beings even and sometimes particularly during times of great upheaval (which fact explains why Jesus says that in these terrible times, people will still be marrying, giving in marriage, eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting, and building (Matthew 24:37-42; Luke 17:26-37), that is, people will carry on as they always have). While unbelievers will do this as if there is nothing particularly special about the period we will be living through and while things will indeed change in some significant ways (a one-world government and government-enforced mixing of populations for two

examples), we will do the same recognizing that our God is about to return and it is okay if we can no longer expect certain things for ourselves that human beings have always taken for granted (for example, our freedom as citizens who are not guilty of some crime).

The Lord did not give us the book of Revelation or knowledge of the Tribulation to weaken our hands and make our feet unsure. Quite the opposite: it is to strengthen us, to encourage us, to prepare us for the final battle before we come into the eternal presence of our King. We have a right to use it as such. We have a right to use every bit of information provided in the Bible to strengthen ourselves for our fight in this world. Knowing that the Tribulation could kick off in a matter of weeks is not cause for confusion and paralysis, but rather the opposite. Everything that Satan could possibly throw at us is well known to us. Everything that he will do is well known to us. His limitations are well known to us. We are an elite unit of soldiers who know everything about the enemies' plans, resources, and hard limitations. That is an incredibly fortunate position to be in. That should make us much more encouraged in our own planning and execution. The enemy may be formidable, but we are in the Omnipotent God's camp, so what does his power mean more than an opportunity to show the unequalled power of our God?

Since not even Satan — despite all his power — can change how human life works, continuing with a plan to provide adequately for ourselves and our dependents, to set up and maintain our spiritual services to the Church, to pursue an expanding knowledge of Jesus Christ, to take up meaningful positions in our local communities for the Lord, and otherwise conduct a life that is pleasing to the Lord and a blessing to everyone who chooses to be blessed by it is the right way to go.

There is nothing to fear. Like Hananiah, Azariah, and Michael, we know that only what God Himself has ordained will be. We are not at this world's, the Antichrist's, or Satan's mercy any more than our Lord was at the Jews' and the Romans' when He was crucified. Just like what power they had over Him was given to them from above, so also any power that this world and its rulers may exert over us comes from above. They cannot do more to us than our God Himself has commanded...and that for our own temporal and eternal good. They cannot even do less if they wanted because they are tools of His pleasure: everything that they will do was decreed before ever God created anything. Just like the Son of Man was never not going to be betrayed, and the issue was only who would want to do it, so also, we, the Church, must be tested and prepared through the fires of the Tribulation to receive our Husband, and only who is willing to be the tool for that is in question (but not to the Lord God). We will be tested but not destroyed. Those who will be used to test us will be destroyed. They have far much more to fear from the Tribulation than we do.

Therefore, we have every right to be encouraged to carry on with our lives without disruption and fear or paralysis because the Tribulation is for us not against us. All believers would be wise to carry on with life as if nothing important has changed because we should have always conducted ourselves as if our Lord was due to return at any time anyway.