

OPEN SEASON ON CHRISTIANS

Matthew 24:9 (NKJV)

9 "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake.

The Greek word (Tote) translated here as "Then" is a "time word" and "a transition word" that is best understood as transitioning to the second half of the tribulation period. It can be translated as "then" or as "at that time".

"Then (tote) is an adverb that functions as an expression of time. Tote means at that time or a point of time subsequent to another point of time. Note that this adverb is found in Mt 24:9, Mt 24:10 and Mt 24:14 and generally indicates sequence (a successive order of two or more things)." – Bruce Hurt

In context, Jesus has just stated in Matthew 24:8 that all these things in verses 4-7 are the beginning of birth pangs which is a descriptive phrase elsewhere used in relation to the Day of the Lord/Tribulation Period (cf. Isa. 13:8 and Isaiah 26:17 (cf. Isa. 66:7-8; Jer. 4:31; 6:24; 22:23; 30:5-7; 48:41; Hos. 13:13; Mic. 4:9-10; 1 Thess. 5:3; Rev. 12:2).

The Scripture in no uncertain terms marks the middle of the Tribulation as a clear turning point in the Tribulation Period.

Daniel 9:27 (NKJV)

27 Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But IN THE MIDDLE of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate." (EMPHASIS MINE)

This is exactly what Jesus references in Matthew 24:15. 2 Thessalonians 2 reveals more specifically what the height of this abomination involves.

2 Thessalonians 2:4 (NKJV)

4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

This is the same time period that Revelation 13 addresses...

Revelation 13:5–7 (NKJV)

5 And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months.

6 Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.

7 It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.

In the last half of the Tribulation Period, it will be open season on Christians as Antichrist

declares all-out war on them. And he will have legal control to pursue killing Christians all over the world. At this point, there will be no safe place to hide. It is precisely at this time that all in the world will be commanded to take the mark of the beast (666) or they cannot buy or sell anything as shown later in Revelation 13 (Rev. 13:16-18).

This last half of the Tribulation is called “the time of Jacob’s trouble” in Jeremiah 30:7; or the time of “great tribulation” by Christ in Matthew 24:21. This will be the absolute worst time in human history. And it will be really rough for those who convert to be God’s people.

Tribulation (Gk. thlipsis) has the idea of “persecution” or “distress” and is used 3 times in this chapter (v. 9, 21, 29). The persecution at this point will be very murderous and full of hatred.

"The unbelieving world will intensify its hatred of God and because it cannot attack Him directly it will fiercely attack His people."

– John MacArthur

Many see a parallel here with the 5th seal which relates to martyred saints in the Tribulation Period.

Revelation 6:9–11 (NKJV)

9 When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.

10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”

11 Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.

The hatred for Christians at this point will be universal in nature as they will be “hated by all nations”, and Christ specifically says it will be, “for My name’s sake.” Those who identify with Christ will have a target on their back!

The Church Age has no specific “signs” but it does have trends that prepare the way for the Antichrist which can be summed up as APOSTASY!

1 John 2:18–19 (NKJV)

18 Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.

19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.

Apostasy that turns on Christians is part of last days madness that prepares the way for the ultimate time of persecution under Antichrist. We see this developing trend even now.

2 Timothy 3:1 (NKJV)

1 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come:

The world is gearing up for the rule of Antichrist. It's coming – the only question is when. It's just a matter of timing. But as Christians we are not looking for the Antichrist, but rather for the Savior from heaven Who delivers us from the wrath to come (Phil. 3:20-21; 1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9). First Christ comes for His Church and then the Antichrist comes on the scene!

LIVE READY!

Titus 2:13 (NKJV)

13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,