

THE TRIBULATION PERIOD

There is no question this world will yet experience a time of “*great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time*” as predicted by our Lord (*Matt. 24:21*). In *Revelation 3:10*, He promised to keep believers from “the hour of trial which shall come upon all the world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

Such a time will have to be worse than anything ever known in human history; far worse than the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 (1 million casualties), than the Black Plaque (9 million killed), than World War I (20 million killed), than the devastation of World War II and Hitler’s holocaust (6 million Jews and at least 4 million Christians killed).

The Scriptures give more space to describing the coming Tribulation period than to any other prophetic event. The Hebrew prophets mention it 39 times, calling it a “time of Jacob’s

trouble” (*Jer. 30:7*), “tribulation” (distress, *Duet. 4:30*), and many other titles denoting distress. The New Testament calls it “the day of the Lord” (*1 Thess. 5:2*), “the wrath of God” (*Rev. 14:10; 15:1, 7; 16:1*), and “the wrath of the Lamb” (*Rev. 6:16-17*). *Revelation 6–19* describe the events of that Tribulation period, the best description of this terrifying, close-at-hand time that will try the whole world.

Daniel, the Hebrew prophet that Jesus quoted most, predicted that troublous times would last seven years and be started by the signing of a seven-year covenant between Israel and “the prince who is to come” (called elsewhere “Antichrist” or “the beast”). Then he predicted this “beast” or governmental ruler would break that covenant in the middle of the Tribulation period and desecrate the temple (*Dan. 9:26-27*). Again, Daniel predicted that when Antichrist arises, he will be empowered by Satan himself with “all power, signs, and lying wonders” (*2 Thess. 2:9*), and will desecrate the temple and set up an image of himself, demanding that the people worship him.

There is little doubt as to when this Tribulation occurs or how long it will last. Daniel predicts it will last “one week” (*seven years, 9:27*). John in *Revelation* divides it into two periods of three and one-half years each or 1260 days each, a total of seven years. During the first three and one-half years, more than half the world’s population dies. During the second half, conditions get even worse AFTER Satan is cast out of heaven and indwells the Antichrist’s body and demands the world worship him. Our Lord Jesus predicted this Tribulation would end immediately prior to His return to this earth to set up His earthly kingdom for 1000 years (*Matt. 24:29, see Dan. 9:24*).

We should never lose sight of the true purpose of the Tribulation period: a divine expression of His mercy and grace. For in that brief seven-year period, at a time when the world’s population is at its largest, God will shake the earth in an attempt to lessen man’s false sense of security. He will send 144,000 Jewish witnesses (evangelists) filled with the Holy Spirit (*Rev. 7; Joel 2:28-32*) AND other witnesses. God will go to the most extreme measures in all of history during the final days of man’s life on earth to bring a massive number of souls to faith in Him so multitudes of people may enjoy the blessings He has prepared for their eternal future.

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We are excited to finally be back in the NEWLY RENOVATED KEY MIDDLE SCHOOL, at 6402 Franconia Road, Springfield, Va. Pastor Harlan & Doris Stilwell, Sr., want to invite you and your family to come and join us as we exalt and worship God in His Holy Presence.

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House of Praise International Church
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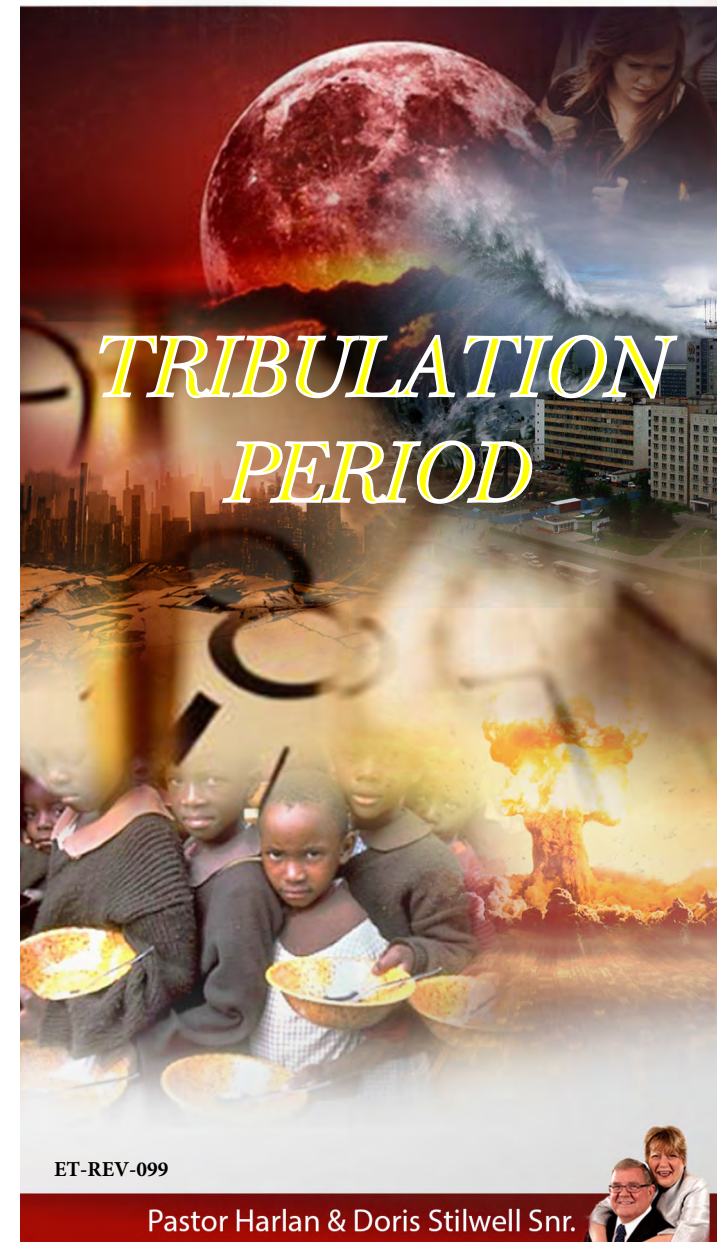
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Pastor Harlan & Doris Stilwell Snr.

