

# The Great Tribulation

**Author:** Marty Purvis

The great tribulation is a period of time in [end time prophecy](#) that most Christians believe will occur before Jesus returns to take His people to Heaven. The events of the great tribulation cause many people to die. These events include prophetic events like the [seven seals](#) and [seven trumpets](#). Christians disagree about the timing of, the length of, and whether they will experience the disastrous events. Christians generally hold three different points of view which affect their understanding of [Bible prophecy](#) – Historicism, Preterism, and Futurism.

Historicists believe that the events of the great tribulation occurred in the past since they understand that most prophecies of Daniel and Revelation were fulfilled in the past. Many historicists believe that the tribulation occurred when papal Rome ruled from 538 to 1798 A.D. So, they do not believe that Christians will experience the great tribulation.

Preterists believe that the great tribulation occurred when Rome destroyed the temple in Jerusalem in 70 A.D. They also believe that since the event happened in the past, Christians will not experience the great tribulation.

Futurists believe that the great tribulation is yet to occur. Many believe the great tribulation lasts 3½ or 7 years. While some futurists understand that Christians will experience the disastrous events of the great tribulation, most believe that Christians will be taken to Heaven (raptured) before or in the middle of the great tribulation.

The common thread of all three points of view is that Christ's people will not have to experience the great tribulation. An underlying question must be answered in these scenarios. Can God be considered fair if Christians are taken to Heaven and escape God's judgements when Christians today and in previous centuries have been martyred for their faith? Unfortunately, the great tribulation will occur in the future and Christians will not be exempt.

[Read about the events that will occur during the great tribulation.](#)