

Great Tribulation ■ Held in the Father's Hand

by Aaron Hurst

This sermon emphasizes the security and faithfulness believers have in Christ, being held in the Father's hand. It delves into the concept of enduring great tribulation, persecution, and standing firm in the face of challenges, trusting in God's presence and protection. The message highlights the importance of confessing Christ boldly, even in the midst of trials, and the promise of God's eternal love and care for His children.

Scripture: John 10:27, Isaiah 40:12, Matthew 10:16, Isaiah 41:10, Romans 8:35, Revelation 7:13

Topics: "Security in Christ", "Endurance in Trials"

Description

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Transcript

Well, good morning to each of you. It's good to see you. I sort of kidded the Brethren at Joy that I'm coming to be guest speaker at Charity today.

It's good to see you all again and worship our King Jesus together with you. How much room do we have here? Oh yeah, we've got some space, yeah. Held in the Father's hand.

In John 10, Jesus shared this truth. He said, My sheep hear my voice, verse 27, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish.

Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one.

Stand with me for prayer, if you could. Father, we come in Jesus' name this morning and acknowledge you in all of our ways, Lord. And Father, we come confessing we're thirsty and hungry.

And Father, we're asking that you would feed us. Feed us the living bread which is Christ. Feed us the living water which is Christ.

Jesus said, I am the bread of life. I am the water of life. Father, I ask today that you would bless each one present, each one listening in, Lord.

And Father, that you would minister by your Holy Spirit to each of our hearts, Lord. We love you, Lord, and we thank you for loving us. In Jesus' name, amen.

You may be seated. I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. And no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

And I and my Father are one. I want to preface the message today with the greatness of our God, the faithfulness of our God, and the security we have in Christ, amen, our Heavenly Father. Secure in Christ, no man is able to pluck the sheep of his pasture out of the Father's hand.

To pluck out means like to take by force, or to snatch away, or to seize upon, or to catch. No man is able to snatch us out of the Father's hand. No man is able to take us by force out of the Father's hand.

We are secure in our Heavenly Father. What a blessing! What a standing is ours! Secure in the Father's hand. Now I would like to have a volunteer this morning to help me out a bit.

Who do you think has the largest hand here this morning? Maybe one of the men, huh? Men maybe generally have larger hands than women. Somebody want to volunteer or somebody want to nominate someone to come up and help me with this illustration? He would love to do it, but his hand is a little bit of a childish hand yet. Thank you for that, but we're going to get the biggest hand we can find.

Brother Robert, are you volunteering? All right, very good. You might get a little wet. I love you brother.

Let's see, what all do we need here? Maybe a cup might help. And a picture. What I want you to do Robert, you see in the palm of your hand, there's a little hollow in there, you know? So you hold your hand like that, make that hollow just as big and as deep as you can.

And let's see how much water you can hold in that hollow of your hand. Are you ready? We better do it over the bucket, what do you think? So let's see how much water we can hold there. And don't dump it then, we're going to put it in the cup so we can measure it.

Let's see how much you can hold. Now, hang on brother, hold it. Now let's put it in the cup.

Very good. Can you see that amount of water in that cup? That's the amount of water brother Robert was able to hold in the hollow of his hand. Thank you brother, appreciate that.

Put that right up here where we can see it. And now, let's look at the scripture in Isaiah. Isaiah 40 verse 12 tells us, Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand? Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand? How many waters do you think are upon the earth? How much water is upon the earth in all the lakes, in all the streams and in the ocean? Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand? How great and how awesome is our God! And meted out the heavens with a span, And comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, And weighed the mountains in scales, And the hills in a balance.

Who hath done all these things? Who hath directed the spirit of the Lord, or a being his counselor hath taught him? Behold, all the nations, all the nations of the earth are as a drop in a bucket. Let's see if we can hear that drop. I think I got more than one drop in there.

Would have had to have a dropper to get just one. Our God, our God declares the nations are as a drop in the bucket. All the nations before him are as nothing, they are accounted to him less than nothing.

To whom will you liken God, or what likeness will you compare unto him? The workman makes a graven image, the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, Casteth silver, makes an image that cannot be moved, it says. But have ye not known, and have ye not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, And the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers, That stretches out the heavens as a curtain, That spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in, That bringeth the princes to nothing, He maketh the judges of the earth as vanity. He also shall blow upon them, and they shall wither, And the whirlwind shall take them away as stubble.

To whom will ye liken me, or to whom shall I be equal, saith the Holy One? Lift up your eyes, and behold, who has created all these things? That bringeth out their host by number, he calleth them all by name, By the greatness of his might, for he is strong in power, and not one faileth. Considering the awesome majesty and greatness of our God, Why would we say, my way is hid from the Lord? God doesn't see me, God isn't interested in me, My judgment is passed over from God? Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, That the everlasting God, the Lord, the creator of the ends of the earth, Fainteth not, neither is weary, there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint, to them that have no might he increases strength.

Even the youth shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fail. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

You know, when we put that scripture in context, it just grows in our hearts and in our minds. We often quote that last part of Isaiah there, and, you know, we shall run, we shall not be weary, we shall walk and not faint. But when you put all of the previous context in there, it's like the awesome greatness of our God, held in the Father's hand.

How big is his hand? We are held in the Father's hand. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble, therefore will we not fear. There is a river the stream shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the Tabernacle of the Most High.

God is in the midst of her and she shall not be moved. God shall help her in that right early. The Lord of hosts is with us.

The God of Jacob is our refuge. Come and behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he has made in the earth. He maketh wars to seize.

Unto the end of the earth he breaketh the bow, he cutteth the spear in sunder. He burneth the chariot with fire. This is our God.

Be still. Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the heathen.

I will be exalted in the earth. The Lord of hosts is with us. The God of Jacob is our refuge.

Held in the Father's hand. Well, that's not quite as bright maybe. Do the black one.

Great tribulation. As Jesus sat by the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him saying, Tell us, when shall these things be and what shall be the sign of their coming in the end of the world? And Jesus proceeded to say, There shall be great tribulation. Such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no nor ever shall be.

And except those days should be shortened, there should be no flesh saved. But for the elect's sake, those days shall be shortened. I don't believe anyone here who is walking in harmony and step with Christ and is aware of our present circumstance in this nation that we live in would have any issue or problem with believing that we are living in the last days and that we are in that time that Jesus was speaking about, that there shall be great tribulation.

The spirit of Antichrist is openly showing itself. The hatred toward God and the word of God is openly displayed and the hatred toward Christians is becoming more and more openly displayed. Now I would like you to turn to Matthew 10 and we'll pick up in verse 16.

The Bible speaks a lot about the great tribulation, speaks a lot about the last days. And we could go to Matthew 24, we could go to Luke 21. Here in Matthew 10, beginning in verse 16, we shall gather a few thoughts.

But I want us to hold in our hearts that we are held in the Father's hand and no one is able to pluck us out of his hand. Matthew 10, 16 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

Beware of men, for they will deliver you up to the council and they will scourge you in their synagogue. Ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake and for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. So we see here Jesus prophesying that in that day, in those last days, there are going to be those who will lay hold on the Christians, on the disciples of Jesus, and they will deliver you up to councils and they will scourge you in their synagogues.

There will be persecution raised up against the true child of God. And when we read here that they will scourge you in their synagogue, a synagogue would depict a meeting place of professed Christians. When we look at church history, the persecution against the children of God who were uncompromisingly righteous came from the false church.

Is that correct? A lot of it came from there. Yes, it also came from those in authority to exercise the persecution, but many times it came from the compromising, lukewarm, worldly church. And they brought persecution upon the true believers.

We see the handwriting on the wall. Large segments of professed Christianity are accepting what God has called an abomination. God has said it is an abomination for a man to lie with a man as he would with a woman.

Same-sex marriage is an abomination to God. Transgenderism is an abomination to God. In the beginning, God created them.

In His image, male and female, created He them. Churches are embracing these kind of abominations into their churches in the name of love and acceptance and tolerance. They will scourge you in their synagogues.

They will cast you out of their synagogues. Ye shall be brought before governors and kings for My name's sake and for a testimony. Oh, but dear brother, sister, listen to what comes next.

When they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak, for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you, held in the Father's hand, anointed by the Holy Spirit of God, a word of knowledge and wisdom from the heart of God, to testify, to be a witness to those who are seeking to undermine the truth and to tear it down. Oh, ye shall be a witness. The Holy Spirit of your Father shall speak through you, brother, sister.

Great tribulation. These things are hard to talk about almost, but Jesus talked about them uncompromisingly and so shall we. They should cause a soberness upon our heart.

Verse 21, The brother shall deliver up the brother. The brother shall deliver up the brother to death and the father the child, and the children shall rise up against their parents and cause them to be put to death. This is almost incomprehensible.

Did Jesus speak the truth or was he just playing with us? I believe Jesus spoke the truth, don't you? I believe Jesus spoke the truth. There will be such enmity and hatred toward the children of God who love God and who are uncompromisingly righteous that they will seek to put them to death because they don't want to hear it. You're a conviction.

You're a testimony. I mean Herodias, she would have put John the Baptist to death a lot sooner if she could have. The Bible declares that because John the Baptist was uncompromisingly righteous and he told Herod, it's not lawful for you to have your brother's wife.

She is your brother Philip's wife even though you were married in a formal ceremony. She's your brother Philip's wife. It's not lawful for you to have her and she would have killed him and she desired to kill him.

But Herod somehow, I don't know, was he sort of trying to walk a middle road? Was he a bit of a compromiser? I'm not sure, but it says he hurt John gladly. But anyway, one day she saw her opportunity and she laid the plot because Herod made an oath to give unto their child, their little girl, anything she would ask of the half of the kingdom and she danced and pleased him and so she went and asked her mother and Herodius said, ah, here's my opportunity, John the Baptist, you're dead. Bring me John the Baptist's head on a platter.

You know, I don't know what would happen to us if we stood on the street corners of Los Angeles or Las Vegas and read the Bible and we read Romans chapter 1 out loud. The pressure is on to compromise. Come on now.

Don't take such a hard stand on divorce and remarriage. Come on now. We need to accept our children who are in that state and we need to show them love and I agree.

We must show them the love of Christ. But somehow we need to walk in righteousness and holiness that our lives are salt. John the Baptist had salted him to not compromise and not give in to the pressure.

God help us. Lord, show us how to live in these days that we are a true witness and testimony for Jesus. That we don't have a wrong attitude and we're just fed up with all of the wickedness in the world and we just sort of want to run away and hide.

No, Jesus said, I've left you in the world to be a witness, to be a light and a testimony. Yeah, it's possible to see how this could happen when parents are absolutely committed to Christ Jesus and the child is in total rebellion and into demonic activities and all of these things that a child would rise up and turn in their parents to the authorities. They did it.

Yeah, they did it. They did it in Germany in Hitler's day. They did it.

The children became in formats to turn in their parents and some of those went to prisons and some went to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. But he that endures unto the end, hallelujah, he that endures unto the end shall be saved.

For sake of time, I'm going to drop down to verse 26. Jesus said, Fear them not. Do not be afraid.

Verse 28, Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. Do not be afraid. Rather, have a holy reverential fear of God.

Fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Verse 29, Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father. The very hair of your head are all numbered.

Oh, the awesome greatness of God! The very hair of your head are all numbered. Amazing majesty, wisdom of God. And he says, Don't be afraid.

Though you may be killed for my name's sake, don't be afraid. You're held in the Father's hand. And no man is able to snatch you out of his hand.

No man. Fear not. Ye are more value than many sparrows.

You are highly valued and treasured by God this morning, brother, sister. You who love the Lord, you who love righteousness and hate iniquity, you who are His sheep, His son, His daughter. And as we're brought before the magistrate, as we're brought before those in authority and kings and those persecutors, he says, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

I don't like pain. I don't like the thought of being tortured. I cringe.

I believe you do too. We don't like that thought. It's repulsive to us.

It goes against the flesh. This flesh can feel great pleasure and feel great pain. Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven.

And I pray that I would have the grace abounding in my heart to confess Christ Jesus as my Lord, He's my Savior. And under pressure to recant and to renounce Christ, the grace of God would be so strong upon us, my brothers and sisters, that we would confess Christ. We would confess Jesus faithful and true, enduring unto the end.

And then he says, He will confess Him also before my Father which is in heaven. Can you imagine your name being confessed by Jesus to the Father? Look at my daughter. Look at my son.

They're holding fast and true to my name. I confess the name of, and you can put your own name in there, I confess the name of to the Almighty God, the Father in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

Oh, the pressure to recant. I am reminded of a certain village where ISIS was beginning to come through. Plundering.

Killing. And I may not have all the details exact, forgive me, but I do know this. A believing family.

The mother taught her children who were quite young. I'll say maybe six to twelve years old. Fifteen maybe.

I'm not sure how old the oldest one was. But she taught her children. Should ISIS come to our house, I want to teach you how we will respond when ISIS comes to our house.

We will welcome them in the name of Jesus. And when they punish us and beat us and threaten to kill us, we will profess and declare to them the name of Jesus. And she taught her little children.

And if you're afraid, just close your eyes. Just close your eyes and confess the name of Jesus. And whatever you do, if they say, well we won't let you go, we won't hurt you if you renounce Jesus.

She said, my precious dear children, whatever you do, do not renounce the name of Jesus. Just confess the name of Jesus. And if they kill us, we shall all be together in heaven in the presence of Jesus.

And so she taught her children of the eternal perspective and value that we do not need to be afraid of those who can kill the body. And they have no more that they can do. Isaiah 41.10 Fear thou not, for I am with thee.

Be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee. Yea, I will help thee.

Yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. In great tribulation, we're held in the Father's hand. Matthew 28.

Last part of the verse. Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the earth, even to the end of the age, even to the end of the world. The amplified paraphrase says, I'm remaining with you perpetually, regardless of your circumstance and on every occasion.

Hebrews 13.5 Let your conversation be without covetous, and be content with such things as ye have. For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, so that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper. I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

Again, the amplified paraphrase. He hath said, I will never, under any circumstance, desert you. Have you ever felt deserted? Have you ever felt alone, like you were counting on someone for something and they deserted you? God will never desert you.

I will never leave you. I will never, in any degree, leave you helpless. Nor will I forsake you, nor will I let you down, or relax my hold on you.

Assuredly not. I will never, never leave you. And there would be testimonies from Christians who suffered torturous deaths with the testimony of Jesus.

That Christ was with them in the fire. The Lord is my helper in my time of need. I will not be afraid.

What can mortal man do to me? Our brother just shared these verses a couple of weeks back, I believe. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, shall the great tribulation that Jesus prophesied that shall come to pass in these last days, shall tribulation separate us from the love of Christ? Distress or persecution? As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long. We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, death shall not separate us from Christ. Death shall not separate us from the love of Christ.

Death shall not separate us from our position being held in the Father's hand. In fact, death shall just be the gateway and the door that opens us up into the very presence of our Heavenly Father. To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.

No death, life, angels, principalities, powers, things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. Well, God told us how this is all going to end. Aren't we glad that we have the Bible that gives us the last chapter and tells us how this is all going to end? But before we come to that beautiful closing, just a few words of warning to us from the words of Jesus out of Luke 21-34 and take heed to yourselves.

This is in the context of the last days before the coming of Christ. Take heed to yourselves lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, drunkenness and cares of this life so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

Watch ye therefore and pray always that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass and to stand before the Son of Man. So how should we then live? Many, many scriptures. So many scriptures.

I remember during the Cold War with Russia and United States, my uncles, my dad, very concerned about the very real possibility of a nuclear annihilation. There was a few from the general local area here that sold their properties and went off into some remote place to seek to escape that way and to await the coming of the Lord. And I don't want to judge them harshly or critically, but it didn't happen at that time.

The world didn't melt in the inferno of the nuclear explosions. And when I read the scriptures of what Jesus taught, I'm not sure the world's gonna end with nuclear all-out war. It's just my opinion.

When you read the scriptures, Jesus says in different places that as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be. There's people going to be going on with life as usual. There'll be marriages.

There'll be purchasing of lands. There will be a lot of things as normal. I don't know.

You look at what we read and concerning the Great Tribulation and the distresses upon nations and nations rising up against nations. You know, all of those things are written as well. But I would want to encourage us this morning.

I believe it was the church of Sardis, and I should have took that scripture down. It says that there in the midst of all the corruption and perversion, there were those who were not contaminated with the filth and the corruption around them, but they had their robes and their garments washed in white. They loved the

Lord.

They walked in righteousness and in holiness before God, and they were clothed in white. I want to encourage us this morning. The greatest preparation that we can do to be prepared for the day when the Lord Jesus comes is to have our robes washed in white in the blood of the Lamb and to be walking with Christ in righteousness and holiness before Him.

That is the greatest preparation. And the Lord may give a word of knowledge. The Lord may call some to sell possessions and goods.

The Lord may call some maybe to relocate. I leave that up to each individual to hear from God, and yet we as a church have often wondered, what will we do? I wondered, Brother Paul, Brother Mel, what will the elders do? I would hope that God would give me grace to stay with the flock and to not seek to save my own life, but to give our lives for one another. My sheep hear my voice, and there are testimonies of unique supernatural revelation given to God's people in fleeing and escaping, I believe it was Germany, before the great purge came.

God tells us how this is going to end. He also tells us when these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draws nigh. Daniel prophesied about the evil days, but he says, those who know their God, they shall be strong and do exploits.

He also says, many shall be purified and made white. Let's turn to Revelation 7, and verse 13, and we'll close with that scripture. Great tribulation, oh, but we are held in the Father's hand.

Revelation 7, 13, we have the Lord opening up the scene to His servant John, and he sees there in 13, a multitude which are arrayed in white robes, and he says, from whence did these come? Verse 14, he said, Sir, thou knowest, and he said unto me, these are they which came out of great tribulation. There is going to be a faithful remnant who will stand faithful with Jesus Christ, and they will come out of that great tribulation, triumphant, and more than conquerors, though we are killed all the day long, and counted as sheep for the slaughter, we are more than conquerors through Jesus who loved us, and we shall come forth out of that great tribulation. These are those that came out of great tribulation, have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Therefore, are they before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple, and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sunlight on them or any heat, for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

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