

# Thriving In The Midst of “Big Trouble”

## The Effort of Awakening

World Outreach Church  
Sermon Discussion Guide  
Sunday Sermon: **July 10, 2022**



The simplest language for the *tribulation* is “big trouble,” and I think we can agree there are increasingly troubling things happening around us. Now, the conflict around us is spiritual, but it is not a frightening time. It is an exciting time, filled with God-opportunities. My advice to you is spend more time reading your Bible and giving thanks to the Lord than surfing the Internet. It will bring good results to you. So, how do we thrive in the midst of trouble? Well, we need to be awakened and become fully invested in the things of the Lord—and this will take courage and effort in this season.

### I. NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN

1. What are some practical ways you can grow spiritually during times of disruption?
2. When have you seen God use unlikely people to bring about His purposes? How does that help you overcome doubt in your own response to the Lord?
3. What is one thing you can do to fix your eyes on Jesus instead of safety, security, or comfort?

*2 Kings 23:1–7* <sup>1</sup> Then the king called together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup> He went up to the temple of the Lord with the men of Judah, the people of Jerusalem, the priests and the prophets—all the people from the least to the greatest. He read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant, which had been found in the temple of the Lord. <sup>3</sup> The king stood by the pillar and renewed the covenant in the presence of the Lord—to follow the Lord and keep his commands, regulations and decrees with all his heart and all his soul, thus confirming the words of the covenant written in this book. Then all the people pledged themselves to the covenant.

<sup>4</sup> The king ordered Hilkiah the high priest, the priests next in rank and the doorkeepers **to remove from the temple of the Lord all the articles made for Baal and Asherah and all the starry hosts.** He burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of the Kidron Valley and took the ashes to Bethel. <sup>5</sup> He did away with the pagan priests appointed by the kings of Judah to burn incense on the high places of the towns of Judah and on those around Jerusalem—those who burned incense to Baal, to the sun and moon, to the constellations and to all the starry hosts. <sup>6</sup> He took the Asherah pole from the temple of the Lord to the Kidron Valley outside Jerusalem and burned it there. He ground it to powder and scattered the dust over the graves of the common people. <sup>7</sup> He also tore down the quarters of the male shrine prostitutes, which were in the temple of the Lord and where women did weaving for Asherah.

*Judges 6:11–16, 25–32* <sup>11</sup> The angel of the Lord came and sat down under the oak in Ophrah that belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, where his son Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress to keep it from the Midianites. <sup>12</sup> When the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, he said, “The Lord is with you, mighty warrior.”

<sup>13</sup> “But sir,” Gideon replied, “if the Lord is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our fathers told us about when they said, ‘Did not the Lord bring us up out of Egypt?’ But now the Lord has abandoned us and put us into the hand of Midian.”

<sup>14</sup> **The Lord turned to him and said, “Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian’s hand. Am I not sending you?”**

<sup>15</sup> “But Lord,” Gideon asked, “how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family.” <sup>16</sup> The Lord answered, “I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites together.” . . . <sup>25</sup> That same night the Lord said to him, “Take the second bull from your father’s herd, the one seven years old. Tear down your father’s altar to Baal and cut down the Asherah pole beside it. <sup>26</sup> Then build a proper kind of altar to the Lord your God on the top of this height. Using the wood of the Asherah pole that you cut down, offer the second bull as a burnt offering.”

<sup>27</sup> So Gideon took ten of his servants and did as the Lord told him. **But because he was afraid of his family and the men of the town, he did it at night rather than in the daytime.**

<sup>28</sup> In the morning when the men of the town got up, there was Baal’s altar, demolished, with the Asherah pole beside it cut down and the second bull sacrificed on the newly built altar!

<sup>29</sup> They asked each other, “Who did this?” When they carefully investigated, they were told, “Gideon son of Joash did it.” <sup>30</sup> The men of the town demanded of Joash, “Bring out your son. He must die, because he has broken down Baal’s altar and cut down the Asherah pole beside it.”

<sup>31</sup> But Joash replied to the hostile crowd around him, “Are you going to plead Baal’s cause? Are you trying to save him? Whoever fights for him shall be put to death by morning! If Baal really is a god, he can defend himself when someone breaks

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down his altar.”<sup>32</sup> So that day they called Gideon “Jerub-Baal,” saying, “Let Baal contend with him,” because he broke down Baal’s altar.

Acts 5:17–21, 27-34, 40-42<sup>17</sup> Then the high priest and all his associates, who were members of the party of the Sadducees, were filled with jealousy.<sup>18</sup> They arrested the apostles and put them in the public jail.<sup>19</sup> But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the jail and brought them out.<sup>20</sup> “Go, stand in the temple courts,” he said, “and tell the people the full message of this new life.”<sup>21</sup> At daybreak they entered the temple courts, as they had been told, and began to teach the people. When the high priest and his associates arrived, they called together the Sanhedrin—the full assembly of the elders of Israel—and sent to the jail for the apostles.

...<sup>27</sup> Having brought the apostles, they made them appear before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest.<sup>28</sup> “We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name,” he said. “Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man’s blood.”<sup>29</sup> Peter and the other apostles replied: “We must obey God rather than men!<sup>30</sup> The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead—whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree.<sup>31</sup> God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.<sup>32</sup> We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”<sup>33</sup> When they heard this, they were furious and wanted to put them to death.<sup>34</sup> But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law, who was honored by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin and ordered that the men be put outside for a little while. . . .<sup>40</sup> His speech persuaded them. They called the apostles in and had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.<sup>41</sup> The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name.<sup>42</sup> Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ.

## II. WHAT IS OUR RESPONSE???

4. Who in your life has inspired you with great courage in following the Lord?
5. In what areas of your life do you need to become more intentional in your response to the Lord?
6. What Bible verses encourage you to be bold and have courage to stand for truth? Share with the group.

Hebrews 12:2–3<sup>2</sup> Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.<sup>3</sup> Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

### A. Aware & Obedient

Matthew 7:24–25<sup>24</sup> “Therefore everyone who **hears these words of mine and puts them into practice** is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.<sup>25</sup> The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.”

### B. A Personal Foundation; A Revelation

1 Corinthians 3:10–11<sup>10</sup> By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds.<sup>11</sup> For **no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.**

Isaiah 28:16 So this is what the Sovereign Lord says: “See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who trusts will never be dismayed.

Ephesians 2:19–21<sup>19</sup> Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household,<sup>20</sup> built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.<sup>21</sup> In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.

1 Peter 2:4 As you come to him, **the living Stone**—rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him—

## Prayer

Almighty God, I offer myself as a living sacrifice, yielding my will to You. Forgive me for ignoring Your invitations and stubbornly pursuing my own agenda. I choose to follow Jesus as Lord of my entire life. Holy Spirit, help me to understand the splendor of His Kingdom and grandeur of the invitation I have been given. Grant me an understanding heart and a revelation of Jesus. May His Kingdom be more real to me than any opportunity of this present world. in Jesus’ name, amen.