

The Time of Trouble and Me

1. When I think of the Time of Trouble, I think:

- War, famine, and religious persecution have happened a thousand times throughout history, and are happening *right now* in different parts of the world, so what's so significant (or different) about this future event?
- The world is becoming more and more secular, especially the United States, so how is it that Adventists think that Christians will be able to enforce their beliefs on the world?
- As Ellen White wrote, "Force is the last resort of every false religion"—so given the opportunity in a world gone mad, it's no wonder that people will try to force their warped view of God.
- How will I cling to God when everything's falling apart?

2. If I wake up one day and it seems clear that the Time of Trouble has begun, I'm going to think:

- "I wish I'd done more to show God's love when there was still time."
- "I'm just here for the memes."
- "Like the Israelites in the wilderness, I can't wait to see what miracles God does for His people."
- "How can anyone reject God's love?"

3. As I try to imagine the world of today turning into the one predicted by prophecy, I think:

- People grandstanding about God, fundamentalists declaring that they must rule the country, people choosing to live as if their actions don't affect anyone else—how exactly will the Time of Trouble be different than what's happening now?
- How has God been so patient with humans all these centuries? What is He waiting for?
- Are we so stuck on old-fashioned descriptions of the end of time that we won't recognize it when it's happening around us?
- What kind of people will be the last to switch to being loyal to Jesus? How will we recognize their shift in allegiance?

QUESTIONS

- Why do you think God will allow the world to fall apart, no longer restrained by His mercies and providence, at the end of time?
- Jesus describes Himself telling some of His self-proclaimed followers, who boast of prophesying and performing miracles in Jesus' name, "I never knew you—Away from me, you evildoers!" (Luke 7:21-23). He told His disciples, "the time is coming when anyone who kills you will think they are offering a service to God" (John 16:2). How do you think Christians can become so misguided?
- What do you think is the difference between the religious worldview of those who will perform or go along with the persecution of the last days, and those who will be persecuted? Put another way, how do the persecutors picture God, compared to how God's last day people do?