

# The Rapture – Our Great Escape!

*“Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away.” Song of Solomon 2:10*

Since the beginning of the church, real Christians have had to contend with false brethren bringing in false doctrines. One such case was the apostle Paul who had to comfort the church at Thessalonica because they had been told that the day of the Lord was at hand. He told them “not to be shaken in mind or be troubled” (2 Thessalonians 2:1-2).

Christians of today are contending with the same thing. There are false brethren (2 Corinthians 11:26) out there claiming that the church of Jesus Christ is going through part or all of the Great Tribulation. This doctrine is totally false! The Bible warns that the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine (2 Timothy 4:3-4) but will heap to themselves teachers having itchy ears.

These false brothers wrest or twist the scriptures (2 Peter 3:16) because they do not have the Holy Spirit dwelling in them. By saying that the church is going through part or all of the Great Tribulation, they are calling the Lord a liar, because it was the Lord himself who told us to “watch and pray that we may be counted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass” (Luke 21:36)

The reason this is happening is because the church of today is being tossed to and fro and is being carried about with every wind of doctrine (Ephesians 4:14). Why? Because people have taken their eyes off of Jesus, “who is the Author and Finisher of our faith” (Hebrews 12:2) and looked to these false teachers instead. But, if we study to show ourselves approved unto God so that we can rightly divide the word of truth, (2 Timothy 2:15), we would prevent this from happening.

The purpose of this Bible study is to offer irrefutable proof that the church, the Bride of Christ, will be raptured before the Great Tribulation even starts. Read it, study it, and never lose your hope in the pre-tribulation Rapture because that hope is Blessed! Because in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, we’ll be gone! (1 Corinthians 15:52)

1. First of all, the church is mentioned 19 times as being on the earth in Revelation chapters 1-3, but she is not mentioned again until chapter 19 when we are participating in the marriage supper of the Lamb up in Heaven (Revelation 19:7) and then we are coming back with the Lord to the earth for the battle of Armageddon (Revelation 19:14).

2. We are told in 2 Thessalonians 2:6-8 that the son of perdition (Antichrist) cannot even be revealed until the one who is hindering him is taken out of the way. Then, that wicked one will be revealed and sign a 7 year covenant with Israel (Daniel 9:27) commencing the Great Tribulation.

Who is hindering the Antichrist from being revealed? None other than the Holy Spirit of God which dwells in each one of us. Why? Because the Bible says “greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world” (1 John 4:4). Therefore the church must be removed from off the earth in order for the Antichrist to come to power.

3. In Revelation 4:1, the words “Come up hither” are spoken and immediately the Apostle John was taken up to heaven and found himself standing before the throne of God. This is symbolic of the church being Raptured up to heaven.

The only other time these 3 words were spoken in the New Testament is in Revelation 11:12, when the Lord calls home the 2 prophets after they have lain dead for 3 1/2 days in the streets of Jerusalem.

What happens to them? They ascend up into heaven! In both instances, men of God are called home to stand before the throne of God. The reason we know this is the Rapture in Revelation 4:1 is because the Father has a book with 7 seals in His right hand (Revelation 5:1). An angel proclaims “who is worthy to open the book and loose the seals” (vs.2). No one is found worthy (vs.3). Would this question be posed to only part of the church? The answer is NO! Only Jesus is worthy to take the book and loose the seals (vs.5) which will commence the Great Tribulation on the earth.

In Revelation 6:1, the first seal is opened, the Antichrist comes on the scene, and as previously stated, he cannot be revealed until the one holding him back is taken out of the way. Therefore, the entire church, the Bride of Christ, is already in heaven.

4. Starting in Matthew 24:15, the Lord is speaking expressly to the Jews, not the church. The abomination of desolation will be set up in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem (vs. 15). "Let them in Judea (not North America) flee to the mountains" (vs. 16). "Pray your flight be not in winter or on the Sabbath day" (vs. 20).

Only if the church has been removed at the Rapture can the antichrist be revealed. Israel will accept him as their long awaited Messiah, rebuild their temple, and the Jews, not the church, will go back to their Levitical Law. Peace and safety is being proclaimed at last (1Thessalonians 5:3).

But, at the mid way point of the 7 year covenant signed with Israel, the antichrist breaks his covenant and turns with great fury on Israel to destroy all the Jews (Revelation 12:13-17). Jesus said, "for then shall be Great Tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time... (Matthew 24:21) and that unless he shortens the days, there should no flesh be saved (vs.22). But, for the elects sake (Israel, Isaiah 45:4, 65:9), the Lord will shorten the days.

The church is also called the elect (1Peter 1:2). But in this instance, Jesus is referring to Israel, not the church.

5. Another reason the church will not be here during any part of the Great Tribulation is that Christians are forbidden to ask for revenge. We are told by the Lord in Mathew 5:44 to "love our enemies, bless them that curse us, do good to them that hate us and pray for those who persecute us."

But in Revelation 6:9&10, the Christians being killed are asking the Lord, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, do you not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"

These Christians are not part of the Bride of Christ, they are the tribulation saints who have missed the rapture and are being killed for the testimony which they held for their faith in Jesus Christ.

6. In Revelation 3:10, the Philadelphia church is told that "because we have kept the word of his patience, He, (The Lord) will keep us from the hour of temptation which shall come upon ALL the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

This only happened once before in Noah's day when the Lord dealt with all the world's sin. Noah and his family were spared the Lord's judgment, as we also will be.

7. In Luke 21:34-36, we are told "to take heed of ourselves not to become overcharged with surfeiting, drunkenness, and the cares of this life so that day (the Great Tribulation) will catch you unawares. For as a snare it will come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth."

Again, this only happened in Noah's day, as was previously stated. We're told to "watch and pray always that we might be accounted worthy to escape all these things (the Rapture) and to stand before the Son of Man.

If the church were going through the Great Tribulation, then why would Jesus tell us to pray to escape it? He is the truth, isn't he? (John 14:6)

8. Another indication that the church will not be here during the Great Tribulation is that when the 144,000 Jews are sealed by God's angel, they are sealed in their foreheads (Revelation 7:3). But now when a person gets saved, they get sealed with the Holy Spirit in their heart (2 Corinthians 1:22).

If the church was still here during any part of the Great Tribulation, then the 144,000 male virgin Jews who will go out to evangelize the world, would be getting sealed in their hearts, not in their foreheads, thus proving they are not part of the Bride of Christ and that the Bride is with Jesus up in heaven called home at the Rapture.

9. If the church is going through the Great Tribulation, why are we told to look for the Blessed Hope and the glorious appearing of the Great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ?" (Titus 2:13)

Also, the Rapture is a hopeful event (1Thessalonians 4:16-18). That is why we are told to comfort one another with these words. But, if we are going through the Great Tribulation, there is no comfort in the knowledge that we are going to suffer and die for our faith.

10. Jesus said in (John 14:2-3), "in my Father's house are many mansions, I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

What's the point of the Lord coming for us if we're all going to be killed during the Great Tribulation?

11. The rapture is also referred to in the Old Testament. In Isaiah 26:20-21 the Lord's people are told "to enter into their chambers and shut the doors and hide (the Rapture) themselves until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity..." What was called chambers in the Old Testament, Jesus called Mansions in the New Testament.

Once again, only in Noah's day was the entire world's sin judged when He destroyed the whole earth with a flood. Noah and his family were spared, weren't they?

12. Zephaniah 2:2-3 states, "before the fierce anger of the LORD come upon you, before the day of the LORD'S anger (Great Tribulation) come upon you. Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid (the Rapture) in the day of the LORD'S anger."

The church again will not be on the earth during the great Tribulation because the Bible says in Psalm 27:5 "In the time of trouble, (Jacobs, not the church) the Lord shall hide (the Rapture) me in his pavilion (Heaven)."

13. We are told in the Bible the Great Tribulation is the time of Jacob's (Israel) trouble (Jeremiah 30:7) not the church's. 490 years were determined upon the Jews to make reconciliation for iniquity and to bring in everlasting righteousness." (Daniel 9:24).

483 years were accomplished on the day the Messiah, Jesus Christ, was cut off or killed. Only seven years remain. That is why the church must be removed from the earth so the Lord can deal strictly with Israel.

14. And finally in Obadiah 15, we are told that the day of the Lord (the Great Tribulation) is near upon all the heathen. We are not heathens!

At the cross, the church which is the bride of Christ, was bought and paid for with the Holy blood of Jesus Christ, our Bridegroom (John 3:29). Jesus loves his bride, therefore we will not be on the earth during the time of his wrath but we will be in heaven safe and sound in our mansions with him.

Now, can there be any doubt that the church does not go through any part of the Great Tribulation? "We have been delivered from the wrath to come," (1Thessalonians 1:10). "For God has not appointed us to wrath," (1Thessalonians 5:9).

Yes, the wrath of God is coming upon this evil world. It came in Noah's and Lot's day and it is coming in ours. Sooner than anyone thinks, especially now that gay marriage has been legalized, not only in our Country, but also in many countries around the world! The Bible states, "...they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not. Woe unto their soul for they have rewarded evil unto themselves." (Isaiah 3:9) The church age is almost over. The rapture can happen any day now. Jesus said, "You will know when it is near, even at the doors," (Matthew 24:33).

We are going home and "everyone who has this hope in himself purifies himself even as he is pure," (1John 3:2-3). If you truly have the Holy Spirit in you, He will guide you into all truth (John 16:13). But, if you continue to keep your eyes on these false brothers who steal your hope and spew their false doctrines, then you need to "examine yourself whether you be in the faith," (2 Corinthians 13:5).

Remember, "there is no fear in love but, perfect love (Jesus) casts out fear and fear has torment" (1John 4:18). But, fear is exactly what you're going to experience if you think the church is going to be on the earth for any part of the Great Tribulation. Just remember the same Jesus (Malachi 3:6) who spared Noah and Lot because they were righteous in his eyes, is going to spare the church because we have His righteousness in us (2Corinthians 5:21). God does not destroy the righteous with the wicked (Genesis 18:23). So fear not, Jesus loves you and He is coming! Rise up my love, my fair one and come away.

Amen!