

# Will The Church Be On The Earth During The Great Tribulation?



## Introduction

Have you ever considered that the terms “the church age” and “the tribulation period” aren’t found in Scripture? In spite of this fact, these extra-biblical terms are two foundational building blocks of pre-tribulation rapture teaching. Extra-biblical terms like these don’t pose a problem to the church if a correct interpretation of scripture supports how they are defined. On the other hand, if these extra-biblical terms can’t be defined using the scriptures, they prove to be false additions.

Can popular false additions to Scripture be demonically inspired language used to divide the church? Is the devil’s agenda to kill, steal, and destroy? Is the strategic misuse of scripture one of Satan’s top weapons? The Scriptures answer a resounding “yes” to each of these three questions! (Matthew 4:6-7; Job 1:6-12; John 10:10; 1 Peter 5:10)

This study will prove that the commonly accepted definitions of “the tribulation period” and “the church age” can’t be accurately supported from Scripture. In addition, it will present the biblical meaning of the rapture, the restrainer, the revealing of Antichrist, the abomination of desolation, the great tribulation and the day of the Lord.

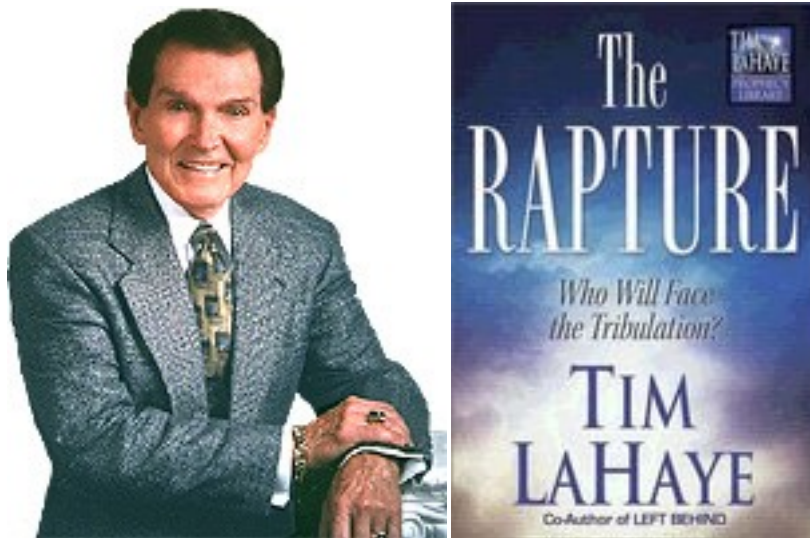
Decades ago as a new believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, I was taught to expect a pre-tribulation rapture. I’m thoroughly familiar with the origin and teaching of pre-tribulation rapture theology. I taught the error until around 2004 when I first began to test it against Scripture. Around 2004, my quest for the truth about the pre-tribulation rapture was sparked as a result of a personal exegetical study of 2 Thessalonians 2:6-8. At that time I wasn’t so dogmatic

about pre-tribulation rapture teaching being a false doctrine. Although I now firmly believe it's a false doctrine, because I understand how a sincere believer can believe it to be true, I still don't believe that a pre-tribulation rapture teacher should be criticized for teaching this error if they have never been exposed to the truth on the subject. I believe it's the responsibility of those within the body of Christ who understand the truth about pre-tribulation rapture teaching to kindly refute this error and patiently instruct its adherents in prayerful hope that God will grant them repentance concerning it.

### **An overview of pre-tribulation rapture doctrine**

Just what is the gist of pre-tribulation rapture doctrine?

According to Dr. Tim LaHaye and other pre-tribulation rapture teachers, Daniel 9:27 teaches that the event marking the beginning the seven year tribulation period is a seven year covenant which Antichrist makes with Israel. This covenant is said to be established sometime following the rapture of the church. The rapture is said to trigger God's prophetic clock giving man only seven years left on earth.



According to pre-tribulation rapture bible teaching, the first 3 ½ years of the period includes the Seal Judgments of Revelation 6 and the Trumpet Judgments of Revelation 8-9. The arrival of Antichrist; war, famine and economic depression on a world-wide scale; great Christian revival; the subsequent martyrdom of these tribulation saints; supernatural catastrophes and plagues and the destruction of the ecumenical church of Revelation 17 are said to characterize the first 3 ½ years of the 7 year Tribulation Period. It's during this period that Antichrist is said to be gaining control of world government.

According to this line of teaching, at the 3 ½ year midpoint of the tribulation, Antichrist breaks his seven year covenant with Israel claiming to be God. The false prophet leads the world to worship him. The world's population and economy is controlled by his mandatory mark. The Bowl Judgments of Revelation 15 and 16 are then sent by God upon Antichrist's world-wide kingdom.

Revelation 18 is said to describe the destruction of Antichrist's physical kingdom. The seven year tribulation period is said to end with the return of the Lord Jesus Christ in power and glory to Jerusalem to establish His 1000 year kingdom.

Dr. LaHaye and many other bible prophecy experts teach that if you are a member of the church (the body of Christ); that is you've personally invited Jesus Christ into your heart as they put it, you will not enter the tribulation period. This is because they believe that the "church age" ends with the rapture of the church which occurs just before "the tribulation period" begins. The "church age" is defined by pre-tribulation rapture teachers as that "parenthesis" of undefined time duration occurring between the 69th week of Daniel 9:25 when Jesus Christ was crucified and the 70th week of Daniel 9:27. The 70th week of Daniel 9:27 is said to mark the beginning of the seven year tribulation period following the rapture of the church. In other words, the "church age" is the parenthesis of time beginning at Pentecost with the birth of the church described in Acts 2 and ending with an imminent rapture. In the rapture, the church is said to be suddenly removed from the earth to meet the Lord in the air before the seven year tribulation Period or 70th week of Daniel 9:27 begins. When the church leaves the earth in the rapture, the church age is considered complete.

### **Refuting the idea of a missing church in Revelation chapters 6-20**

One biblical example in which the church is on earth while Antichrist is in power is sufficient proof that the "church age" isn't this "parenthesis" of unknown time length.

Dr. LaHaye and other pre-tribulation rapture teachers teach that the church isn't mentioned anywhere in chapters 6-18 of the Book of Revelation. Since these chapters describe what they define as the tribulation period, they use this to prove that the church isn't on the earth during the tribulation period. Is this thinking biblically correct?

Dr. LaHaye is correct that the word church isn't literally mentioned once in chapters six through chapter 18 of the book of Revelation. However, the word church isn't used in the books of 2 Timothy, Titus, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John and Jude either. Yet, we'd never consider thinking that these books didn't contain teaching regarding the church would we? No, because we recognize that the

biblical concept of the church exists within each book even though the books don't contain the word church. The presence of the biblical concept of the church within each book is proof that the church is a part of the message of the books. Let's look at the proof of this from scripture.

The Greek word translated church in English is *ekklesia*. In context, *ekklesia* is a gathering or assembly of citizens called together, marked off and separated from the rest of humanity, in united worship of the living Head of the church, Jesus Christ. The following scriptures define this biblical term. (Colossians 1:18; 1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22-23)

The church is composed of all people from all nations who have turned to God from false gods or idols in order to serve the only living and true God, the Lord Jesus Christ. Like Israel was specially chosen by God to be the holy nation of God as promised in the Abrahamic Covenant; individuals from all nations chosen as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ become a holy nation. They become Abraham's seed, the people or Israel of God in the New Covenant. (Exodus 19:3-6; Deuteronomy 26:16-19; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; Galatians 3:26-29, 6:15-16; 1 Thessalonians 1:6-10; Titus 2:11-14; 1 Peter 2:4-10)

According to Dr. LaHaye, a person is a member of the church, the body of Christ, if they've personally invited Jesus Christ into their heart. People fitting this definition of the church are found in Revelation chapters 6 through 20.

- Revelation 6:9-11 (souls, fellow servants and brethren slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held)
- Revelation 7:3-8 (144,000 servants of our God from all of Israel's tribes sealed in the forehead. Jewish people from the tribe of Judah who receive Jesus Christ become equal members of his body, the church, according to Galatians 3:27-29)
- Revelation 7:9-17 (an uncountable number of people from all nations and nationalities that were made white in the blood of the Lamb (the body of Christ, his church) and were now comforted in God's presence after suffering great tribulation. This huge group includes Gentile believers, not just Jewish members of the body of Christ, the church.)
- Revelation 12:10-17 (The wrath of the devil or Satan's war with the seed or offspring of Israel's Messiah, Jesus Christ, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.)
- Revelation 13:7, 10 (Antichrist's war of victory over the saints. Saints or hagios is used 61 times in the New Testament referring to members of the church or the body of Christ.)
- Revelation 14:6-13 (The everlasting gospel is preached to all nations and nationalities. Saints with the faith of Jesus who obey him exhorted to patience during the reign of the beast. The dead which die in the Lord henceforth is mentioned in verse 13.)

- Revelation 17:6 (martyred saints of Jesus in Babylon the Great)
- Revelation 18:4, 24 (God's people, the church, called out of Babylon the Great before her destruction.)
- Revelation 20:4 (faithful martyrs for Jesus beheaded by the beast Antichrist)

Is Dr. LaHaye correct in reasoning that the church won't be on the earth during the period he defines as the tribulation period? Haven't we just read that the church, as the bible defines her, is on the earth during the reign of Antichrist? Absolutely, we've just seen in the scriptures an uncountable number of people fitting the biblical definition of the church present on earth while Antichrist wars with them.

Revelation 7:9-17 teaches that a great multitude, a large uncountable crowd from all nations came out of "great tribulation". (Revelation 7:14) This white robed multitude from all people groups suffered physically at the hands of men for their commitment to obey God's word. (Revelation 6:9-11; 7:9-17)

### **The church in Daniel 12:1**

Daniel 12:1-2 describes a time of trouble or great tribulation during the time in which God's people (his church) will be delivered (escape, slip away or be saved) or "raptured" as the New Testament teaches in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:9 and 1 Corinthians 15:51-53.

"Thy people" in Daniel 12:1 are God's people. This Scripture defines them as "every one that shall be found written in the book". The book is the book of life containing the names of all Jews and Gentiles which belong to the true church according to 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; Galatians 3:26-29, 6:15-16 and Ephesians 2:11-22. Philippians 4:3 and Revelation 3:5, 13:8, 17:8, 20:12 and 20:15 speak of the book of life.

### **Refuting the idea that Matthew is the Jewish gospel**

The period described in Daniel 12:1-2 is said to be a time of trouble greater than anything the world had ever seen up until that time of trouble. Matthew 24:21 and Mark 13:19-20 describe the same time period in similar words.

Pre-tribulation rapture teachers teach that Matthew is the Jewish gospel written by a Jew to Jews. These teachers use verses unique to Matthew to say that Matthew's "Jewish gospel" is further proof that only Jewish believers will go through "the tribulation period". Note, however, that Mark teaches the same truth in a gospel never said to be a "Jewish gospel".

- *For then 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 no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. (Matthew 24:21-22)*

• *For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be. And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days. (Mark 13:19-20)*

Do you recognize now that it's an innumerable number of people from all nations and nationalities who will become saved members of the church out of great tribulation? Doesn't the salvation, persecution and martyrdom of "the tribulation saints" need to be placed within a "church age" or "age of grace" dispensation once we recognize that it's not just Jews from the nation of Israel that become saved members of the church out of great tribulation? Shouldn't this "age" be placed within the final seven years? Doesn't it become clear that the church is present on the earth during great tribulation?

### **Refuting the idea that the saints are exclusively Jews**

Daniel 7:7-11, Daniel 7:23-27, Daniel 8:8-12, Daniel 11:33-35, Revelation 12:13-17 and Revelation 13:7 refer to war that Antichrist will make against the saints.

This war involves psychological and physical attacks upon true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ during the 42 month global dictatorship of Antichrist. (Revelation 13:5-10)

Antichrist subdues and overcomes the saints in this war. (Revelation 13:7)  
Many saints are captured and or killed. (Daniel 11:33-35; Revelation 13:5-10; Revelation 6:9-11; Revelation 7:13-17)

A remnant of saints, however, is preserved in the wilderness of Moab in modern Jordan during the 42 month reign of Antichrist.

(<http://bibleatlas.org/regional/moab.htm>; Revelation 12:6-17; Isaiah 16:1-5)

Some pre-tribulation rapture teachers falsely claim that those believers involved in this war are solely Jewish.

Scripture reveals that the noun saints is used 14 times alone throughout the Revelation. It refers to men and women of God with obedient faith in Jesus Christ. (Revelation 14:12)

Both Jews and Gentiles can be called saints. (Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:11; Romans 2:28-3:29; Ephesians 2:11-16)

The apostle Paul wrote the Book of Romans primarily to the Gentiles and specifically to “**all** that be in Rome, beloved of god, called to be **saints**.” (Romans 1:7; Romans 1:13)

John made it very clear to readers of the Revelation that he saw countless multitudes of people from among all nationalities and nations who arrived in heaven after suffering through great tribulation. (Revelation 7:9-17; Revelation 6:9-11)

Scripture teaches that the mature patience and faith characterizing the saints of Revelation 13:10; those overcoming the trying processes involved in unjust imprisonment and even martyrdom during great tribulation; will be developed over a period of time. (James 1:2-3; Romans 5:1-5)

### **Refuting the idea that the Holy Spirit is the restrainer**

Pre-tribulation rapture teachers tell us that the presence of the Holy Spirit in the world restrains Antichrist from being revealed. They teach that the Holy Spirit is the restrainer that must be removed from the world before Antichrist can be revealed. If the Holy Spirit is removed from the earth before the final seven years; how do the innumerable number of people from all nations and nationalities spoken of in Revelation 7:14 become saved members of the church out of great tribulation?

2 Thessalonians 2:3 tells us that there’s coming a specific point in the world’s future that the man of sin, the son of perdition, or antichrist will be revealed.

**2Th 2:3** Let no<sup>G3361</sup> man<sup>G5100</sup> deceive<sup>G1818</sup> you<sup>G5209</sup> by<sup>G2596</sup> any<sup>G3367</sup> means:<sup>G5158</sup> for<sup>G3754</sup> *that day shall not come*, except<sup>G3362</sup> there come<sup>G2064</sup> a falling away<sup>G646</sup> first,<sup>G4412</sup> and<sup>G2532</sup> that man<sup>G444</sup> of sin<sup>G266</sup> be revealed,<sup>G601</sup> the<sup>G3588</sup> son<sup>G5207</sup> of perdition;<sup>G684</sup>

**2Th 2:3** μη<sup>G3361</sup> PRT-N τις<sup>G5100</sup> X-NSM υμας<sup>G4771</sup> P-2AP εξαπατηση<sup>G1818</sup> V-AAS-3S κατα<sup>G2596</sup> PREP μηδεν<sup>G3367</sup> A-ASM-N τροπον<sup>G5158</sup> N-ASM ου<sup>G3754</sup> CONJ εαν<sup>G1437</sup> COND μη<sup>G3361</sup> PRT-N ελθη<sup>G2064</sup> V-2AAS-3S η<sup>G3588</sup> T-NSF αποστασια<sup>G646</sup> N-NSF πρωτον<sup>G4412</sup> ADV-S και<sup>G2532</sup> CONJ αποκαλυφθη<sup>G601</sup> V-APS-3S ο<sup>G3588</sup> T-NSM ανθρωπος<sup>G444</sup> N-NSM της<sup>G3588</sup> T-GSF αμαρτιας<sup>G266</sup> N-GSF ο<sup>G3588</sup> T-NSM υιος<sup>G5207</sup> N-NSM της<sup>G3588</sup> T-GSF απωλειας<sup>G684</sup> N-GSF

Revealed is translated from the Greek verb αποκαλυφθη stemming from the root verb apokalupto. Apokalupto means to take off the cover or disclose.

The revealing of antichrist is described in the next verse.

*Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. (2 Thessalonians 2:4)*

Antichrist will be revealed to the world as he proclaims and displays himself as the Supreme Deity or Divinity in the central sanctuary of the temple at Jerusalem.

Pre-tribulation rapture teaching says that the Holy Spirit or “restrainer” is removed from the earth at the rapture of the church before the final seven years. They believe that once the restraining power of the Holy Spirit is removed, antichrist can be revealed to the world. An in-depth analysis of the biblical text underlying this interpretation, however, reveals another scenario.

In order to make it easier to understand this study of 2 Thessalonians 2:6-8, the biblical text with its corresponding Strong’s Concordance numbers is shown in the original Greek Textus Receptus from which the King James English (KJV) version of the scriptures was translated.

2Th 2:6 And<sup>G2532</sup> now<sup>G3568</sup> ye know<sup>G1492</sup> what withholdeth<sup>G2722</sup> that he<sup>G846</sup> might be revealed<sup>G601</sup> in<sup>G1722</sup> his<sup>G1438</sup> time.<sup>G2540</sup>

2Th 2:7 For<sup>G1063</sup> the<sup>G3588</sup> mystery<sup>G3466</sup> of iniquity<sup>G458</sup> doth already<sup>G2235</sup> work:<sup>G1754</sup> only<sup>G3440</sup> he who now letteth<sup>G2722</sup> <sup>G737</sup> *will let*, until<sup>G2193</sup> he be taken<sup>G1096</sup> out of<sup>G1537</sup> the way.<sup>G3319</sup>

2Th 2:8 And<sup>G2532</sup> then<sup>G5119</sup> shall that Wicked<sup>G459</sup> be revealed,<sup>G601</sup> whom<sup>G3739</sup> the<sup>G3588</sup> Lord<sup>G2962</sup> shall consume<sup>G355</sup> with the<sup>G3588</sup> spirit<sup>G4151</sup> of his<sup>G848</sup> mouth,<sup>G4750</sup> and<sup>G2532</sup> shall destroy<sup>G2673</sup> with the<sup>G3588</sup> brightness<sup>G2015</sup> of his<sup>G848</sup> coming:<sup>G3952</sup>

The original Greek Textus Receptus text for these verses with its Greek parsing is as follows:

2Th 2:6 και<sup>G2532</sup> CONJ νυν<sup>G3568</sup> ADV το<sup>G3588</sup> T-ASN κατεχον<sup>G2722</sup> V-PAP-ASN οιδατε<sup>G1492</sup> V-RAI-2P εις<sup>G1519</sup> PREP το<sup>G3588</sup> T-ASN αποκαλυφθηναι<sup>G601</sup> V-APN αυτον<sup>G846</sup> P-ASM εν<sup>G1722</sup> PREP τω<sup>G3588</sup> T-DSM εαυτου<sup>G1438</sup> F-3GSM καιρω<sup>G2540</sup> N-DSM

2Th 2:7 το<sup>G3588</sup> T-NSN γαρ<sup>G1063</sup> CONJ μυστηριον<sup>G3466</sup> N-NSN ηδη<sup>G2235</sup> ADV ενεργειται<sup>G1754</sup> V-PMI-3S της<sup>G3588</sup> T-GSF ανομιας<sup>G458</sup> N-GSF μονον<sup>G3440</sup> ADV ο<sup>G3588</sup> T-NSM κατεχων<sup>G2722</sup> V-PAP-NSM αρτι<sup>G737</sup> ADV εως<sup>G2193</sup> ADV εκ<sup>G1537</sup> PREP μεσου<sup>G3319</sup> A-GSN γενηται<sup>G1096</sup> V-2ADS-3S

2Th 2:8 και<sup>G2532</sup> CONJ τοτε<sup>G5119</sup> ADV αποκαλυφθησεται<sup>G601</sup> V-FPI-3S ο<sup>G3588</sup> T-NSM ανομος<sup>G459</sup> A-NSM ον<sup>G3739</sup> R-ASM ο<sup>G3588</sup> T-NSM κυριος<sup>G2962</sup> N-NSM αναλωσει<sup>G355</sup> V-FAI-3S τω<sup>G3588</sup> T-DSN πνευματι<sup>G4151</sup> N-DSN του<sup>G3588</sup> T-GSN στοματος<sup>G4750</sup> N-GSN αυτου<sup>G846</sup> P-GSM και<sup>G2532</sup> CONJ καταργησει<sup>G2673</sup> V-FAI-3S τη<sup>G3588</sup> T-DSF επιφανεια<sup>G2015</sup> N-DSF της<sup>G3588</sup> T-GSF παρουσιας<sup>G3952</sup> N-GSF αυτου<sup>G846</sup> P-GSM

These verses teach the antichrist is now restraining himself from revealing himself until out of the midst of the mystery of iniquity antichrist is born or comes into being. (reference 2 Thessalonians 2:7 in Greek: μονον<sup>G3440</sup> ADV ο<sup>G3588</sup>



T-NSM κατεχων<sup>G2722</sup> V-PAP-NSM αρι<sup>G737</sup> ADV εως<sup>G2193</sup> ADV εκ<sup>G1537</sup> PREP μεσου<sup>G3319</sup> A-GSN  
γενηται<sup>G1096</sup> V-2ADS-3S )

Mystery is the Greek word Strongs #3466 μυστηριον (musterion). It carries with it the idea of silence imposed by the initiation of occult religious rites. This could be indicative of the hidden underworld secrecy of the Luciferic occult orders conspiring under the dark cover of the unseen spiritual world to accomplish their Lord Satan's will in the world. These are the evil forces of conspiracy whose purpose is to destroy true Christianity and God's eternal covenant with his people. (Ephesians 6:10-12)

The key phrase in 2 Thessalonians 2:6-8 includes Strongs #2722 and #1096 translated "taken out of the way" from the Greek root ginomai. Ginomai means "to be born".

Note that Strongs #2722 translated letteth in verse 7 is translated withholdeth in 2 Thessalonians 2:6. Withholdeth and letteth used in both verses 6 and 7 are from the same Greek root verb katecho. The Greek parsing of the verb indicates that both are present tense active voice participles in the accusative case. The accusative case of this verb reveals that this verb functions as the object of this verb's action. The fact that the verb is in the active voice indicates that the subject is the agent that performs the action expressed in the verb. So in this case the subject of the verb, antichrist; not the Holy Spirit or restrainer, is performing the action of restraining and is also the object of the restraining action. Yes, it's Antichrist, not the Holy Spirit, who's the "restrainer".

A correct theology of salvation also refutes the false teaching that the Holy Spirit is restrained during the earthly reign of Antichrist. Pre-tribulation rapture teachers claim that Jews will be saved during Antichrist's rule. Isn't it a timeless truth, however, that it's only by God's grace through faith in Christ's sacrificial death and resurrection on their behalf that anyone is saved? How could the Holy Spirit be removed from the earth during a time in which an innumerable number of people from all people groups are saved? Isn't the Spirit of God the only person able to convict any Jew or Gentile of sin and bring new spiritual life to them? Isn't the Holy Spirit the only one who can baptize or place anyone into the one universal body of Christ we know as the church? (John 6:63, 16:713; Ephesians 2:1-9; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13)

Knowing these things, how can anyone rightfully believe that the Holy Spirit and the church are absent from the earth during the last seven years of earth's history? Hasn't Scripture revealed that the definition of the man-made term "church age" is incorrect? Haven't we just seen that the restrainer can't be the Holy Spirit and that the church is present during the final seven years? The church needs to reform herself and redefine the "church age" according to biblical teaching or discard this extra-biblical term altogether!

## **Refuting the commonly accepted definition of the tribulation period**

The next part of this study will examine the biblical definition of the tribulation period.

Do you believe that a strong defense is critical to victory in battle? Do you believe that the church has enemies in the spiritual realm that wrestle against her? Do you believe that the Spirit of God is the spirit of truth and that Jesus Christ is the truth? Do you believe that God desires us to live and worship in truth? If you answered yes to these questions; isn't it logical to believe that a true, biblical understanding of the tribulation period is critically important to the future life of the church?

Many U.S. churches that believe we live in the last days before the return of the Lord continue to teach a pre-tribulation rapture. This teaching has conditioned the church to believe that the rapture will occur before Antichrist is revealed.

Many professing Christians believe that God would never leave them here to suffer under Antichrist's reign because their Pastor and or a prophecy expert has told them that God has promised to remove them from the earth before Antichrist is in power.

Isn't Satan a liar and the Father of lies? What if the pre-tribulation rapture teachers are wrong about the timing of the rapture? Couldn't their error be a strategic lie of Satan designed to pin many professing Christians to the mat in his wrestling match with them? Does it matter that many professing Christians could be deceived by the serpent's lies? Can you imagine the potentially disastrous effects upon the faith of those that have been conditioned for years to believe that they'll never suffer great tribulation when they suddenly realize that they must accept life on the Orwellian terms of the beast or die?

Many professing Christians believe that following the rapture, the 70th week of Daniel or tribulation period begins with the signing of an Antichrist brokered peace treaty between Israel and her neighbors and ends seven years later with the return of the Lord. Is this truth the masses are being fed?

The 70th week of Daniel is described in Daniel 9:27 as follows:

*And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.*

We know from Genesis 29:27 that in the Hebrew language and culture, one week refers to a period of seven years. Thus, Daniel 9:27 is referring to a literal seven year period.

The word confirm used in Daniel 9:27 is gabar. It means to strengthen. The word covenant used in Daniel 9:27 is beriyth. Beriyth is used 254 times in the Old Testament. It means an alliance, pledge or agreement of friendship or peaceful coexistence between people or between people and God. Since the covenant is confirmed for seven years with many, the agreement is possibly one promising peaceful coexistence between the world's major religions centered in Jerusalem for a seven year term. The seven year term agreement is actually broken after about 3 ½ years when Antichrist stops the daily temple sacrifice according to Daniel 9:27 and 12:11.

The use of the word many in Daniel 9:27 implies an agreement that would possibly affect all nations including Israel. We know for certain that it's a covenant affecting the Jewish religion since Daniel 9:27 tells us that the Antichrist acts about 3½ years later to stop the daily temple sacrifices and offerings. Then, 1290 days (about 3 ½ years) after the temple sacrifice is stopped by Antichrist, Daniel 12:11 tells us that the "abomination that maketh desolate" is set up.

*And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. (Daniel 12:11)*

The revealing of Antichrist occurs when he proclaims himself to be God in the temple according to 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4. The abomination of desolation isn't specifically mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4. Thus, it would be incorrect to use these verses to support the idea that the revealing of Antichrist occurs during a seven year period we call the great tribulation?

From examining the scriptures directly referring to the abomination of desolation in the context of great tribulation, the abomination of desolation is defined as the surrounding of Antichrist's armies around Jerusalem. This is seen in studying the parallel accounts regarding Jesus' teaching on the abomination of desolation and noticing the slight variation of Luke 21:20 compared to Matthew 24:15 and Mark 13:9. Daniel 11:31-12:1 also sheds light on this topic.

Matthew 24:15-22	Mark 13:14-20	Luke 21:20-24
<p><sup>15</sup>When ye therefore shall see <b>the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place,</b> (whoso readeth, let him understand: <sup>16</sup>Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: <sup>17</sup>Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: <sup>18</sup> Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. <sup>19</sup>And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! <sup>20</sup>But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: <sup>21</sup><b>For then shall be great tribulation,</b> such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. <sup>22</sup>And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.</p>	<p><sup>14</sup>But when ye shall see <b>the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not,</b> (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains: <sup>15</sup>And let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter <i>therein</i>, to take any thing out of his house: <sup>16</sup>And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment. <sup>17</sup>But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! <sup>18</sup>And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter. <sup>19</sup><b>For in those days shall be affliction,</b> such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be. <sup>20</sup>And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.</p>	<p><sup>20</sup>And when ye shall see <b>Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.</b> <sup>21</sup>Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. <sup>22</sup><b>For these be the days of vengeance,</b> that all things which are written may be fulfilled. <sup>23</sup>But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! <b>for there shall be great distress</b> in the land, and wrath upon this people. <sup>24</sup>And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.</p>

According to the scriptures related to the abomination of desolation, Gentile armies of the fourth and final global beast kingdom commanded by Antichrist will bring great distress and wrath upon the land of Israel during this time of great tribulation. Many occupying the land of Israel at that time will be conquered and taken hostage to foreign nations as the following scriptures

reveal. (Matthew 24:15-22; Mark 13:14-20; Luke 21:20-24; Daniel 11:31-36, 45-12:1)



According to the scriptures we just read, great tribulation begins at the time the abomination of desolation is set up.

Do the scriptures ever explicitly define the 70th week of Daniel, the final seven years, as “the tribulation” or “the tribulation period”? No, remember that Daniel 9:27 states that the length of the covenant confirmed or strengthened by Antichrist with Israel is intended to be seven years. The scriptures never explicitly define the 70th week of Daniel as “the tribulation”

According to Daniel 9:27, Antichrist breaks the covenant with Israel by ending the temple sacrifice “in the midst” or approximately the middle of the intended seven year long agreement after about 3 ½ years. Then, according to Daniel 12:11, there’s a 3 ½ year period (1290 days) from the point in time at which Antichrist breaks the covenant until he sets up the abomination of desolation spoken of in Daniel 9:27, 11:31, 12:11; Matthew 24:15; Mark 13:14 and Luke 21:20 which begins the period of great tribulation.

Daniel 12:11-12 tells us that 45 days (1335-1290=45 days) following the placing of the abomination of desolation, those that waited are blessed. The context of this promise is that God’s people are living through the worst period of human history. They are waiting upon him to deliver them. The word waited, Strong’s #2442, is used in Habakkuk 2:3 and Zephaniah 3:8 within the context of waiting for the time that the Lord returns. This blessing upon God’s faithful elect closes the tribulation period for the sake of God’s people who wait for him. (Daniel 12:11 -12)

So we see that the period of great tribulation begins when the abomination of desolation (the surrounding of Jerusalem by Antichrist's Gentile armies) is set up.

Daniel 12:11-12 teaches that this period ends 45 days later with the return of the Lord to gather his saints and bring his wrath upon the armies gathered against Jerusalem and the world. (Zechariah 14)

The elect that have endured the 45 day period of great tribulation are blessed as the Lord gloriously returns to gather his church and unleash his wrath. This event describes the blessed hope, the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ spoken of by Paul in Titus 2:13.

### **Scripture concerning the timing of the rapture**



Daniel 12:1 tells us that at this time God's people; identified as those that are found written in the book of life, are delivered (malat) or saved as Michael the archangel stands up on their behalf. This salvation is described in 1Thessalonians 4:16-17 where Paul writes of the return of the Lord.

This return is accompanied by the voice of the archangel, the trump of God, the resurrection of dead believers and the rapture of the living remnant of the church to meet the Lord in the air. Jesus taught that the resurrection of his people would occur at the last day. (John 6:39-40)

Paul also linked the sounding of the trump of God with the resurrection of believers in 1 Corinthians 15:52 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16. The sounding of the trump is also associated with the return of the Lord in Matthew 24:3, Isaiah 18:3, 27:13 and Zechariah 9:14. This confirms that great tribulation is cut short for the sake of the church just 45 days after the abomination of desolation is set up. Could it be that the sovereign and omniscient Lord acts in great mercy to end the tribulation because he knows that his people's faith

wouldn't be able to endure tribulation of this nature any longer? Matthew 24: 21-22 indicates that this period of great tribulation is ended for the sake of believers. Isn't it obvious that the church (the elect or believing Christians) has to be on the earth at that time if great tribulation is ended for the sake of believers?

### **Scripture concerning "The tribulation"**

The word tribulation (thlipsis in the original Greek) is used 19 times in the Textus Receptus Greek New Testament. Three times it's described as great tribulation or megas thlipsis in the original Greek. (Matthew 24:21; Revelation 2:22, 7:14) Daniel 12:1-2, Matthew 24:9-22, Mark 13:19-20 and Luke 21:12-24 are all describing a period of time that is defined by them as the most troublesome time in the history of the world.



Dr. LaHaye and other pre-tribulation rapture teachers tell us that Revelation 3:10 means that the church will be delivered from the tribulation of the last seven years. Is this correct?

Revelation 3:10 states:

*“because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.”*

In order to see if this verse is actually teaching that the church will be raptured before the beginning of the final seven years and its tribulation, we need to compare the phrase “keep thee from” used in Revelation 3:10 with “keep them from” found in John 17:15.

The principle of spiritual protection from the world’s evil and tribulation is consistent with the doctrine of Jesus and his apostles. (John 16:33; Acts 14:22; Romans 5:3; Romans 12:12; 1 Thessalonians 3:4)

In John 17:15, Jesus taught his disciples that they won’t be physically removed from the evil of the world; however, he promises to protect them spiritually within it. Jesus promises to deliver his people from the power of temptation and guard them from loss by keeping his eye upon them through fiery trial. (John 16:33)

The principle of spiritual protection in tribulation, as opposed to a belief in removal from tribulation, applies in both Revelation 3:10 and John 17:15. The words translated **keep** and **from** used in the phrase “keep them from” used in John 17:15 and “keep thee from” in Revelation 3:10 are the same.

**Revelation 3:10** Because<sup>G3754</sup> thou hast kept<sup>G5083</sup> the<sup>G3588</sup> word<sup>G3056</sup> of my<sup>G3450</sup> patience,<sup>G5281</sup> I also<sup>G2504</sup> will **keep**<sup>G5083</sup> thee<sup>G4571</sup> **from**<sup>G1537</sup> the<sup>G3588</sup> hour<sup>G5610</sup> of temptation,<sup>G3986</sup> which shall<sup>G3195</sup> come<sup>G2064</sup> upon<sup>G1909</sup> all<sup>G3650</sup> the<sup>G3588</sup> world,<sup>G3625</sup> to try<sup>G3985</sup> them<sup>G3588</sup> that dwell<sup>G2730</sup> upon<sup>G1909</sup> the<sup>G3588</sup> earth.<sup>G1093</sup>

**John 17:15** I pray<sup>G2065</sup> not<sup>G3756</sup> that<sup>G2443</sup> thou shouldest take<sup>G142</sup> them<sup>G846</sup> out of<sup>G1537</sup> the<sup>G3588</sup> world,<sup>G2889</sup> but<sup>G235</sup> that<sup>G2443</sup> thou shouldest **keep**<sup>G5083</sup> them<sup>G846</sup> **from**<sup>G1537</sup> the<sup>G3588</sup> evil.<sup>G4190</sup>

In John 17:15, Jesus taught his disciples that although they won’t be physically removed from the evil of the world. He promises that he will protect them spiritually within it. He taught this principle throughout his ministry in places like John 16:33 which reads:

*“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”*

In agreement with the principles Jesus taught in John 17:15, Revelation 3:10



teaches that Jesus promises to protect the Church of Philadelphia spiritually through global tribulation in response to the perseverance of the church through tribulation. He promises to deliver them from the power of temptation and guard them from loss by keeping his eye upon them through fiery trial.

### **Scripture concerning “The day of the Lord”**

Is the great tribulation spoken of in the verses above the same period of time as the day of the Lord?

The day of the Lord is the one day the Lord returns to gather his church and bring vengeance and wrath upon his enemies. (Zechariah 14:7; Isaiah 10:17)

Is there any biblical reason to make that one day any more than a literal day?

The sign that this one day is about to occur are cosmic disturbances that occur **immediately after the great tribulation of those days** spoken of in Matthew 24:9-28; Mark 13:9-23; and Luke 21:12-24.

The coming of the day of the Lord is signaled by dramatic changes in the solar system. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come. (Acts 2:20; Matthew 24:29-31; Mark 13:24-27)

On that day that the Lord gloriously returns, the army of his elect brings judgment upon the nations that are allied with antichrist against Him at Jerusalem. The following scriptures illustrate this truth. (Joel 2:1-11, Joel 2:30-31; Joel 3:9-16; Isaiah 13:6-11; Isaiah 24:1-6, 17-23; Isaiah 34:1-8; Ezekiel 32:7-12; Acts 2:19-20; Matthew 24:29; Mark 13:24-25; Luke 21:25-26; Revelation 6:12-17)

The word for nation used in Daniel 12:1 is the Hebrew word *goy* which usually refers to Gentile nations.

The use of the word *goy* by no means supports the belief that this time of trouble is isolated within the land of Israel. The scripture is clear that Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles during this period.

First, Revelation 3:10 states that this time will come upon the whole world.

*“because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.”*

Second, consider that the effects of the fulfillment of the prophecy of Daniel 9:24-26 regarding the first 69 weeks of Daniel weren't confined to Israel alone.

Although the Lord Jesus Christ was revealed to Israel 483 years from the decree of King Artaxerxes to rebuild Jerusalem as prophesied in Daniel 9:26; the first coming of Jesus Christ impacted the entire world. Likewise, the fulfillment of the 70th week of Daniel will have global impact.

Rather than being an event merely affecting the nation of Israel, the covenant affects “many” according to Daniel 9:27. Likewise, when the covenant is broken by Antichrist, “many” will be affected. The resulting great tribulation spoken of in Daniel 12:1, Matthew 24:29, Mark 13:19 and Luke 21: 21-24 which precedes the day of the Lord isn’t confined to Jerusalem; it’s great tribulation. Luke 21:24 says that during this period Jews in Jerusalem will be taken away as captives into all nations while Gentiles under the authority of Antichrist trample down Jerusalem.

Third, the word great used to describe this tribulation is the word megas. Megas implies largeness in both intensity and scope. Daniel 12:1 and Mark 13:19 tell us that the magnitude of affliction suffered during this time is the worst the world will ever see!

## **Conclusion**

According to the Bible, Antichrist’s war is with the saints. This war lasts 3 ½ years and its attack is against those saints that choose to worship Jesus Christ rather than him. (Daniel 7:23-27; Revelation 12:17, 13: 7 -15, 20:4) The persecution and hatred directed toward God’s people during this time is worldwide. Believers in Jesus Christ will be hated of all nations and of all men for the sake of Christ’s name according to Matthew 24:9; Mark 13:13 and Luke 21:17. There are no scriptures teaching that professing Christians living in the U.S. are exempt from the Satanic wrath to be directed against the church for 3 ½ years under the global dictatorship of Antichrist. (Revelation 12:12-17, 13: 3-18)

Although Antichrist’s wrath operates within the sovereign prophetic plan of God; the unholy, unjust wrath of the devil operative through Antichrist is a separate entity from the holy, just wrath of God intended for the antichristian world on the day of the Lord.

According to 1 Thessalonians 5:1-9, believers in Jesus Christ aren’t appointed to the wrath of God that occurs on the day of the Lord’s return. On the other hand, Philippians 1:29 teaches that all true believers should expect suffering for the sake of Christ.

The Bible never states that the church will escape great tribulation. It does say the church won’t experience the wrath of God on the day the Lord returns but will be “caught up“ to be with him. (1 Thessalonians 5:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:9) “Caught up” is translated from the Greek root word harpazo. It means to

seize, snatch away or carry away by force and eagerly claim for one's self. Rapture comes from Latin translation of this word. (1 Thessalonians 4:17)

The scriptures teach that this rapture occurs at the last day according to a synthesis of John 6:39-40; Matthew 24:29-31; Mark 13:24-27; Luke 21:25-28; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Daniel 12:1-2.

Ezekiel 13 describes past false prophets of Israel who were driven by selfish purposes. These men weren't being led by God's spirit. They weren't intelligently interceding for national sin or courageously calling the nation to stop its wickedness. Instead, they were whitewashing over the wickedness of their homeland with false promises of a peaceful and prosperous escape from imminent judgment. This false prophecy only enabled Israel to become more idolatrous. Eventually the patriots were disappointed when God's righteous judgment occurred. The Judean people eventually lost their homeland security when Babylon took them captive. The useless predictions of the selfish shepherds were exposed in the Babylonian Captivity like a powerful storm destroys an improperly constructed wall. (Ezekiel 13:1-16)

Likewise, the vast majority of the American church is being promised an imminent escape from the great tribulation which Antichrist's terrifying global war of terror against the church will produce. (Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:21; Mark 13:19; Revelation 7:14)

The promise of an imminent rapture to remove the church from the earth before Antichrist is revealed and God's wrath is poured out upon the world is being made in spite of the biblically based truth that God's judgment begins with his people. (1 Peter 4:1-7; Amos 3:1-8; Ezekiel 9:6; 1 Corinthians 10:1-12)

During the time in which the man of sin takes dominion over his global kingdom and is making war with God's kingdom, many confused and disillusioned professing Christians will fall away and join the kingdom of Antichrist. This apostasy is the logical outcome of being ill-prepared to face the powerful and seductive force emanating from the beast that they'd been taught they'd never see. (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12; Daniel 11:31-39, 12:7-12; Revelation 13:7-10)

During this time of great tribulation; the greatest time of trouble the world will ever see, Antichrist and his global beast nation physically overcome those martyrs that refuse total submission to his blasphemous authority.

Can you imagine any true Pastor teaching the church that they should give thanks for the higher power or government of Antichrist and the global beast nation? Sadly, I'm becoming increasingly convinced that professing Christians will be taught by many false prophets in the pastorate that the church should

joyfully submit herself as a slave to the abominable government of the beast as they would submit themselves to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Enemy combatants of the global beast kingdom of Antichrist will overcome spiritually by remaining faithful to the word of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Daniel 7:21, 11:33-39; Revelation 6:7-11, 7:9-17, 12:7-17, 13:7-10, 14:9-13, 15:2, 20:4)

In suffering at the hands of Antichrist, the church is honored to be united with the sufferings of her Lord Jesus Christ who willingly suffered for her. (Acts 5:40-42; Philippians 1:29; 2 Thessalonians 1:4-5)

As he has done in the past, God is informing his servants of the future suffering they may endure. God doesn't want his people to be in complete darkness where they will be vulnerable to the shock and awe of Satan's fiery darts during Antichrist's war against them. (Amos 3:7; Ezekiel 7-13; Luke 22:15, 31-34; John 9:16, 16:13; Revelation 2-3)

The Lord promises to be with his children as they walk through the valley of the shadow of death.

As it is written,

*for thy name sake we are killed all the daylong; 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 nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor 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 our Lord. (Romans 8:36-39)*

I believe that God no longer wants his people to tolerate false pre-tribulation rapture teaching from church leaders who have been given ample opportunity to correct their teaching. Because of the divisive nature of this error and its power to lead people astray in the last days, I warn the church on behalf of her Lord to stop supporting this doctrinal error.

Its past time that the true body of Christ unite herself under the proper interpretation of biblical truth. The error of pre-tribulation rapture teaching is hidden in plain sight to those who want the Spirit of God to open the eyes of their heart to see it. It's my continued prayer that you will accept the truth of this message and begin to spread it throughout the body in a spirit of love. This war on error will help prepare the church for the 70th week of Daniel and the terror of global dictatorship to be experienced under the fourth and final global beast kingdom of Antichrist.