

Building A Case For The Pre-Trib Rapture

Lesson #28

Kept From The Hour

August 10, 2022

Pre-Trib proponents are accused of being escapists who are unwilling to suffer for their faith. Opponents to the Pre-Tribulation view of the Rapture point out that Christians have been suffering terribly for 2,000 years and so "justly" should go right on suffering into THE TRIBULATION. Remember: The Tribulation, just like the Flood, exists as the pouring out of God's wrath upon the world as judgment for man's continued rebellion against Him. Both God's wrath in the Flood and in the future Tribulation are especially set-apart time periods for Divine judgment.

➤ This is in contrast to the everyday suffering all Christians experience.

God's Word, a source of wisdom, authority and equipping, tells us what to expect in this world.

John 16:33 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.

II Tim. 3:12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

Eph. 6:11-12 Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.¹² For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

John 15:18-19 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

¹⁹ If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

Scripture predicts a future time of the outpouring of God's wrath in the end-times.

The 7 year Tribulation

The Great Tribulation

The Day of The Lord

Daniel's 70th Week

Time of Jacob's Trouble

Consider: There is a significant difference in God's Word between tribulation in terms of trials and difficulties and THE TRIBULATION, a specified time of 7 years when God's wrath is poured out upon all the earth.

Pre-Trib Belief: *The entire 7 years is a period of divine wrath. [Rev. 6]

- The wrath proceeds from the activity of the worthy Lamb.
- Jesus Christ breaks the seals and begins the wrath of the Lamb.

*The seals, trumpets and bowls are manifestations of God's wrath.

Consider: To suggest the wrath of God is limited to the last half, last $\frac{1}{4}$ or just at the end

Ignores The Source of the 7 seal judgments that begins the 7 year period. [Rev. 6]

Note: There are at least 7 clear references to God's wrath.

Rev. 6:17-18; 14:8-10; 14:19; 15:7; 16:1, 19; 19:15

*The means of protection for the Church is REMOVAL by the Rapture.

Consider: Why would God leave His bride on earth during The Tribulation Period?

Strombeck: "One is forced to ask, how could the Lamb of God die and rise again to save the Church from wrath and then allow her to pass through the wrath that He shall pour upon those who reject Him? Such inconsistency might be possible in the thinking of man, but not in the acts of the Son of God?"

Walvoord: A desire to escape the Tribulation Period is based on the promises of the Bible. It is a time of Divine Judgment & Wrath on a world that has rejected Jesus Christ.

God's Promise To The Church of Philadelphia: Kept from the Hour

Rev. 3:10-11 Because you have kept My word of perseverance [patience],

- I also will keep you from the hour of the testing [temptation],
- that *hour* which is about to come upon the whole world,
- to test those who live [dwell] on the earth.

Behold, I am coming quickly; hold firmly to what you so that no one will take your crown.

Question: Does this read as though there is a condition that has to be met in a believer's life, other than faith alone in Christ alone, in order to participate in the rapture?

- Because you have...I will keep you ...

John Niemela, Greek scholar: We know that chapter divisions, verse divisions, punctuation marks are not part of the original Greek manuscripts. They were added by copyists of the original manuscripts, but they were never part of the original.

Problem: Most English translations separate Rev. 3:9 and 3:10 with a period. Does it matter?

Rev. 3:9-10 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. ¹⁰ 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.

- Note the copyists placed a period at the end of verse 9 and started 10 with a capital.
- It makes it appear the BECAUSE is a condition to participate in the rapture of v. 10.

Note: According to the Greek scholars, you should put the period in the middle of v. 10.

Now the passage reads: behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee because thou hast kept the word of my patience.

- Your enemies are going to come down and bow at your feet one day because you have been obedient to Me. > end of idea.

Then what follows is an unconditional promise of the rapture of the Church.

- "I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is about to come upon the whole earth."

Note: In Greek the word because [*hotti*] follows a promise rather than something that precedes the promise. Thus, the condition is not for participating in the rapture.

The condition is whether the enemies of the church will bow down before that church because they have kept the condition of obedience.

Rev. 3:9-10 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee 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.

Consider: My obedience will be evaluated at the Judgment Seat of Christ after the Rapture.
II Cor. 5:9-10 Therefore, whether we are at home [on earth] or away from home [and with Him], it is our [constant] ambition to be pleasing to Him.

¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

I Cor. 3:11-15 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

¹² Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

¹³ Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

¹⁴ If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

¹⁵ If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Consider: My obedience will be evaluated at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

My obedience does not determine if I participate in the rapture.

The Hour Of Trial or Testing

Rev. 3:10b I also will keep you from The Hour of testing, [that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.]"

Greek word for "hour" is óra. In John's writing an hour does not refer to a literal 60 minutes.

- John typically refers to an age, an extended period of time.

John 12:27 Jesus said, Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

- He's not talking about 60 minutes.

- He's talking about the ordeal of experiencing the wrath of God during the crucifixion.

Jesus spoke openly about The time of The Tribulation in Matthew 24. Because He uses "hour," an extended age and the definite article in front of the word "hour," He's referring to something already well defined which is The Tribulation period. [7 year period]

This hour of trial which is yet to come has no purpose for the Church, but rather is a testing for unbelievers and an hour of trouble for Jacob or Israel [Jer. 30:7].

- Israel's program is to go into this time period in unbelief so that a remnant can be brought to faith.
- Zech. 13:8-9 is very clear: a third of the nation will be part of that remnant.
- Israel will go from unbelief to belief through the mechanism of The Tribulation period

The promise of Revelation 3:10 to the church not only guarantees being kept from the trials of the Tribulation period but being kept from the time period of the Tribulation. The promise is not, I will keep you from the trials. It is I will keep you from The Hour Of The Trials...

- from the coming time that will affect the whole earth.

Charles Ryrie "The only way to escape worldwide trouble is not to be on the earth. And not just from the events, but from the time. The only way to escape the time when the events take place is not to be in a place where time ticks on. That's why we can't be on the earth during this time because there's time on the earth. We must be transferred into a place that's timeless. The only place that meets those qualifications is heaven.

The Hour which is about to come upon the whole world

"whole" = adjective in Greek = *holos*

The Greek word for world used by Jesus is *οικουμένης*, which is a word typically used to describe the inhabited earth [Luke 4:5, Rom. 10:18, Rev. 16:14] not the cosmos.

The Purpose Of This "Hour" Period: To Try The Wicked & Unbelievers.

Key Point: A main purpose of the judgments of the tribulation:

- to "punish" [Isa. 26:21] or "test" [Rev. 3:10] the earth dwellers.

Old Testament Background A couple forms of "earth dweller" is used almost 50 times in the Hebrew Old Testament. A similar phrase "world dwellers" occurs 5 times.

- "Earth dwellers" in the Old Testament is translated "land dwellers" or "inhabitants of the land" since the context references a localized area of land or country like Israel.

However, in a global context, the same Hebrew phrase is rendered "inhabitants of the earth."

Psa. 33:14; Isa. 18:3; 24:6, 17; 26:21; Jer. 25:30; Joel 2:1; Zep. 1:18

All five uses of "inhabitants of the world" appear to be in a global context.

Psa. 33:8; Isa. 18:3; 26:9, 18; Lam. 4:12

In all but one instance [Lam. 4:12] "inhabitants of the world" are used in the same context with "earth dwellers."

When "earth dwellers" and "world dwellers" are used in the same contexts it serves to strengthen the notion that a global rather than local context is intended.

Every global use of "earth dwellers" in the Old Testament appears in a judgment context.

- All these phrases seem to indicate they will take place in the future, during the day of the Lord, the Tribulation Period.

Significant: Both "earth dwellers" and "world dwellers" are used multiple times in Isaiah 24–27, often called "Isaiah's Apocalypse." It describes a global judgment that will end with the destruction of God's enemies and the restoration of God's people Israel in their land.

Isa. 24:5-6, 17 God's worldwide judgment will come upon all mankind because of specific sins of "the inhabitants of the earth."

Isaiah 26:9b "for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

Isa. 26:20-21 speak of the tribulation period.

Isa. 26:20 Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.

Israel will be hidden away and protected "until indignation runs its course."

See Rev. 12: Satan is on the earth and vehemently pursues the Jews.

The abomination of desolation takes place.

Since the remnant of Israel will be protected during the last 3 ½ years of the tribulation, then what will be God's purpose for the judgment of this period?

Isa. 26:21a "For behold, the LORD cometh out from His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity;

A purpose for the tribulation: Punish the earth dwellers.

- Very similar to Rev. 3:10 the Lord will "test those who dwell upon the earth."
- It seems clear: Isaiah 24— 27 provides the backdrop for understanding what is meant in Revelation 3:10, as well as John's use of "earth dwellers" throughout Revelation.

Note: The "earth dwellers" are referred to 10 more times in Revelation.

Rev. 3:10; 6:10; 8:13; 11:10 2xs; 13:8, 12, 14 2xs; 14:6; 17:8

- They are recognized as enemies of God, persecutors of God's people and
- objects of God's wrath because of their hardened rebellion against the Lord.

Earth Dwellers:

Rev. 3:10 Tested to show their true character

Rev. 6:10 Identified as those who persecute and kill believers during the Tribulation

Rev. 8:13 Many judgments are targeted for the earth dwellers.

Rev. 11:10 Earth dwellers rejoice and send gifts to one another when the 2 witnesses are killed in Jerusalem in the middle of the Tribulation

Rev. 13:8,12 When the Antichrist is introduced in Rev. 13, "all who dwell on the earth will worship him.

Key Point: 100% of earth dwellers receive the mark of the beast and will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire.

Rev. 13:14 During the Tribulation, the earth dwellers will follow the Beast, will be deceived by the false signs and wonders of the Beast and will erect an image of the Beast, likely in the Jewish Temple.

Rev. 14:6 The earth dwellers will be the target of the preaching of the gospel by an angelic Messenger.

Rev. 17:8 No earth dweller will follow the Lamb; they will wonder after the Beast.

Key Point: Earth dwellers seem to trust in man and his environment.

Renald Showers: "All the Revelation references to 'them that dwell upon the earth' clearly indicate that they will be unsaved people of the future period of testing who will never get saved. . . . In spite of the devastating horrors of the sixth trumpet, which will kill one-third of mankind, the earth-dwellers will not repent of their wicked deeds [Rev. 9:20-21]."

Mark Hitchcock: These are "unsaved people who during the Tribulation, stubbornly and steadfastly continue in their rejection of God. They are those on earth who are totally given up to evil and the hatred of God and His people. The entire horizon of their lives is earthbound"
Remember: God destroyed all the earth dwellers before with the world-wide flood.

He is coming again to destroy all the earth dwellers.

Side Note Pattern: In the world-wide flood, God destroyed all the earth dwellers.

He preserved the remnant of 8 people in the Ark, type of Jesus Christ.

He "raptured" Enoch, a type of the Church, before His judgment fell.

To Test The Earth Dwellers

Test = peirazo = #3986= to endeavor to discover the nature or character of something by testing, try, make trial of, put to the test

II Peter 2:9 The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations,[#3986] and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

Key Point: A major purpose for the judgments of the tribulation in Rev: 6—19 is to test the earth dwellers under the most extreme circumstances in order to vindicate their rejection of the Lamb [Jesus] and His message, the Gospel.

Key Point: No matter the severity of the judgments issued from heaven, not a single earth dweller repents [Rev. 6:15-17; 9:20-21; 16:9, 11, 21].

Consider: The whole thing is designed to expose the true nature of unbelievers.

It has nothing to do with our trials and our future as a member of God's church.

We have to be kept from this whole hour entirely. If God were to insert us into this time period, it would violate His purpose for which The Hour comes.

Renald Showers "Christ based His promise on the fact that the church saints had already passed their test. [Rev. 3: kept my Word; did not deny His name] In light of that, it appears that because they had already passed their test, Christ promised that He would not put them into the period that...will have the purpose of testing a very different group of people."

God's Promise To The Church of Philadelphia:

Rev. 3:9-11 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee because you have kept My word of perseverance [patience].

- I also will keep you from the hour of the testing [temptation],
- that *hour* which is about to come upon the whole world,
- to test those who live [dwell] on the earth.

Jesus promised to keep His Church not just from or out of the testing, but from the "hour" of testing. The Church's exemption is from the very beginning of Rev. 6 [1st seal broken].

Norman Geisler: One cannot be saved from an entire hour by being any part of it.

The trial that is about to fall upon the whole earth is the Tribulation found in Rev. 6-19.

Note: IF this meant the Church will be kept safe during the Tribulation, then something goes terribly wrong. Saints are being killed on a massive scale. If these saints are Church saints, they are NOT being kept safe and Rev. 3:10 is meaningless.

- Keep Church saints in a separate category from Tribulation saints.

Consider: It is true Rev. 9:4 and 16:2 mention divine protection of believers on earth from the 5th trumpet and first bowl judgments, but these are the only 2 references to God sparing believers on earth during the Tribulation. Remember, these believers are not part of the Church. They are the Tribulation Saints who trust Christ after the Rapture. With the exception of the above 2 references, all the seal, trumpet and bowl judgments will be experienced by believers and non-believers.

Starting in Rev. 6:1, God's wrath will be falling everywhere.

Critics of Pre-trib belief: The promise is limited to the church of Philadelphia.

This view is refuted by Jesus' statement: His message is for all the churches

Rev. 3:13 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

The scope of the passage is global, involving the whole world.

Pre-trib belief: It promises that no believer of the Church Age will be present for any of the future tribulation.

Consider: Because the church did not exist until after the death of Jesus, after His resurrection, after His ascension and after the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost

- The Church had NO PART in the first 69 weeks which was related only to Israel.

Dan. 9:24a Seventy weeks [490 years] are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city...

- Why would we expect or think the future 70th week would include the Church?

1. Every passage dealing with the Tribulation such as Matt. 24, Daniel 12, Luke 21, Mark 13, Jer. 30, Revelation 7 deals with Israel, NOT THE CHURCH.
2. The nature of the 70th week is not to cleanse an individual but to reveal the degradation and the need of the unregenerate heart.
3. True believers in The Church have been cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ.
 - The Church is the object of Christ's love. Eph. 5:25
 - As the root and stem [John 15:5] and the foundation and cornerstone [I Cor. 3:9; Eph. 2:19-22] there is a unity and a union with our Lord Jesus Christ. We are His body.

The Greek construction is literally translated "I also, you, will keep out of the hour of the trial."

The key phrase that we need to look at more intently is the phrase "τηρήσω ἐκ, keep out of."

1. The main debate centers around the Greek words tereo ek [keep from].
2. Does it mean protect from or through or does it mean remove from or keep out of?

Rev. 3:10 keep = verb *tēreō* ek = preposition from. "the hour of testing"

John 12:27 Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say,

'Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

"save"= *sozo* very similar to *tēreō* "save me from"= *ek* "save me from what?="this hour."

- There is an hour of divine wrath > time period when the Son of God paid the full penalty for our sins.

Note: Jesus prayed through the same three-fold combination.

He's not saying I want to go through half of the crucifixion, or three quarters of the crucifixion. He's saying in My humanity I want to be kept out of it completely.

Note: The same three-fold combination of *ek*, a similar verb and a time of wrath is seen in Revelation 3:10. Jesus is not telling us we're going through part of it, half of it, three-quarters of it, all of it. He's saying you're going to be kept out of it completely.

Col. 1:13 Who hath delivered [rescued] us from [*ek*] the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

"For He rescued" very similar to keep, "He rescued us from" *ek*, "rescued us from" what?

"the domain of darkness." When you placed your personal faith in Christ your whole position changed, you were taken out of the domain of darkness.

As a Christian you're not 75% saved; you're completely out of the domain of darkness.

"I will keep you from the hour ..." from the Tribulation. This is very specific and carefully described in the Greek to emphasize and clearly teach the pre-tribulation rapture of the church. The Greek words for "keep out" are *threw ek* meaning "out of."

There are 4 other ways this could have been stated if John wanted to imply that church age believers would be in the Tribulation, but none of them were used.

- *threw en* = To keep in. This would be a promise of preservation *in* the Tribulation.
- *threw dia* = to keep through. This would be a promise to keep us *through* the Tribulation.
- *airew ek* = to take out, or *swzw ek* = to save out. This could mean that believers would go into the Tribulation and then be taken out of the Tribulation.
- *airew apo* = to take from. This would mean that believers would go into the Tribulation and then be taken out of the Tribulation.

Rather than any of the above, John chose to use *threw ek*, which means "to keep out."

Charles Ryrie: If, as posttribs say, the promise is that the church will live through the Tribulation under divine protection and emerge at the end, then why was a different preposition not used which would convey that meaning?

- For instance, "in" [*en*] would mean the church would be kept safely in that time.
- Through [*dia*] which would mean kept through the Tribulation
- John used "*ek*" = from, out of = The church will be removed from that time.

Consider: Jesus gave the promise in Rev. 3:10 to comfort the church at Philadelphia.

If believers will be present during this time of global upheaval, persecution and massive martyrdom, how comforting would Jesus' promise be?

John 14:1 Jesus just starts to describe the rapture: "Do not let your heart be troubled..."

Paul Benware: The promise is to keep the church from the time period of testing, which necessitates actual removal from the time period itself and not preservation through it.

- The means of the removal from the universal time period of testing is the Rapture prior to the beginning of the Tribulation."

Significant: When Jesus pronounced the promise in Rev. 3:10, 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. He said, in Rev. 3:11 Behold, I am coming quickly; hold firmly to what you so that no one will take your crown.

The coming of Jesus is the means God will use to bring about the church's removal.

This sequence strongly implies that the deliverance of Christians from the hour of testing will occur in conjunction with Christ's coming.

How do you know it is referring to the future?

- It talks about judgment, rewards and crown.
- Judgment that happens in heaven immediately following the rapture.
- This judgment of rewards is always connected to the imminent return of Christ.

It implies imminency. The charge here is to "hold fast," a warning against spiritual carelessness and carnality. The warning reminds us to live in the light of His coming and to hold fast to Him in faith and service. For when He comes it will mean examination and rewards.

He will not forget our service on His behalf, but we must hold fast to the hope and expectation of His coming for us or we will live carelessly, indifferently to our calling and purpose as believers. When that happens, we lose our crowns, rewards for faithful service.

- So the Spirit quickly adds, "that no one take your crown."

To lose a crown: Be deprived of the honor or glory potentially available through faithful living.

Swete: "The picture is not that of a thief snatching away what is feebly held, but rather of a competitor receiving a prize which has been forfeited."

1. It could refer to rewards lost because of the evil influences that we might allow to hinder us in the race of life [Matt. 13:7, 22; Col. 2:18; Rev. 2:20 with 2:25f].

II John 1:8 Look to yourselves, [examine] that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

2. It could refer to rewards which are lost and given to others because we failed to hold fast. I Cor. 9:24-27 Paul challenges us regarding rewards, "Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win [lay hold of]. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things.

Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

²⁶ I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

²⁷ But I keep under my body and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway [disqualified; from what? The Prize]

II Tim. 4:7-8 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.

May we be diligent in our race, keep our eyes on the author and finisher of our faith and finish well.