

**THE RAPTURE**  
**BEFORE — OR AFTER — THE TRIBULATION?**  
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Most churches believe in a future Rapture — being caught up by Jesus at His return.

The **vast majority believe they will be raptured BEFORE THE GREAT TRIBULATION — BEFORE THE ANTICHRIST APPEARS.** Their view is often referred to as **“Pre-Trib”**.

Their churches often teach that Jesus would not leave His Bride to suffer The Tribulation — and will rescue her beforehand.

It certainly sounds like good news!! We escape before the really bad things happen. But what if these teachings are wrong? **What if people expect to be delivered ahead of time ... but then discover it's false teaching?** They look around and see the Antichrist is marching out and great destruction is all around.

It could be very traumatic to discover you and your family are now actually in the Tribulation ... when your church always assured you that you would escape!

I think that most people are going to be shocked — and dismayed! They will discover they have “inherited lies”.

Yet **Pre-Trib is extremely popular — the majority view.**

Somewhat popularised by the “Left Behind” books best seller of its day —over 65 million — plus spin-off movies. Book 1 quickly deals with the Rapture of the saints. All of the subsequent books describe the trials of those “left behind” who have to face the Antichrist and the persecutions of the “New World Order”,

I suspect many people treat the Left Behind books as Bible Commentary — rather than pure fiction!

Two basic features of this doctrine:

- The Rapture is imminent. Could be today. No pre-warning.
- It is “Pre-Trib”. Occurs years before the Great Tribulation (which therefore the saints will escape).

We don't get our doctrine from Tim LaHaye's books! What does the Bible teach about Jesus' return?

I would have thought that one of the clearest passages is Jesus' comments in:

### **Matthew 24:29-31**

29 “**Immediately after the tribulation of those days** the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

30 **Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven,** and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and **they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.**

31 And **He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds,** from one end of heaven to the other.

This appears to be a classic Tribulation passage? **It states explicitly it occurs AFTER The Tribulation!**

**The Heavenly Signs — and then the “Catching away”!**

And — hardly without warning? See the next passage:

### **Matthew 24:15-16**

15 “Therefore **when you see the abomination of desolation,** spoken of by Daniel the prophet, **standing in the holy place**” (whoever reads, let him understand),

16 “then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

**The Abomination of Desolation is a very visible sign!**

Yet millions believe “IMMINENT” and “PRE-TRIB”?? **How do they explain these verses away?**

That’s the subject for today. **We’ll examine two key reasons that are used.**

**Firstly ... here in Matthew Chapter 24 — they CLAIM simply is that the “elect” mentioned in verse 31 are not believers!**

This may be a Rapture — just not of Christians — they were Pre-Trib!! **Allegedly Jews!**

But if we let the Bible interpret itself ... how does it use the term “elect”? **(Greek: EKLEKTOS — a chosen one).**

It appears over 20 times in the New Testament — **never used of ethnic Jews or nation.**

**Let’s have a look at where the word “ELECT” appears?**

#### **Matthew 24:20-22**

20 And pray that **your** flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.

***(Jesus is talking to his disciples — the Saints)***

21 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

22 And **unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.**

#### **Matthew 24:23-25**

23 “Then if anyone says to **you**, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or ‘There!’ do not believe it. ***(“You” — disciples)***

24 **For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.**

25 See, I have told you beforehand.

Also ... **notice the pronouns “you” — Jesus is talking to His Disciples — Believers — the ELECT!**

**Nothing implies Jesus’ words are addressed to ethnic Jews.**

Some claim that the entire Gospel of Matthew is directed to the ethnic Jewish people — so we should “understand” the verses accordingly?

But not so! **Mark’s Gospel is exactly the same! (Addressed to the Gentiles — probably those in Rome)**

### **Mark 13:21-27**

21 “Then if anyone says to **you**, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or, ‘Look, He is there!’ do not believe it.

22 For **false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.**

23 But **take heed**; see, I have told **you** all things beforehand.

24 “But in those days, **after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light;**

25 **the stars of heaven will fall**, and **the powers in the heavens will be shaken.**

26 **Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.**

27 And then He will send His angels, **and gather together His elect** from the four winds, from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven.

### **“You” and “Elect” — the Saints.**

### **Luke 18:1-8**

1 Then He spoke a parable to them, that **men always ought to pray and not lose heart,**

2 saying: “There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man.

3 Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, ‘Get justice for me from my adversary.’

4 And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, ‘Though I do not fear God nor regard man,

5 yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.' ”

6 Then the Lord said, “Hear what the unjust judge said.

7 And **shall God not avenge His own elect** who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? (**“Elect” — Christians — God’s people**)

8 I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?

**God will avenge His Elect (at His Coming). The wider context of Luke Chapter 18 is Christ’s Coming — as we see in the previous verses.**

### **Romans 8:31-34 (THE HOLY SPIRIT CHAPTER)**

31 What then shall we say to these things? If **God is for us**, who can be against us?

32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for **us** all, how shall He not with Him also freely give **us** all things?

33 **Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect?** It is God who justifies.

34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for **us**.

### **“US” — The Elect are the Believers?**

#### **Colossians 1:1-2**

1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

2 **To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ** who are in Colosse:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### **Colossians 3:12**

12 **Therefore, as the elect of God**, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;

**Talking to “the Elect of God” — the faithful brethren ... the Saints ... the Chosen — NOT the Jewish nation!**

### **Revelation 17:12-14**

12 “The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast.

13 These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast.

14 These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and **those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful.**”

### **Revelation 17:14 (Voice)**

14 ... **those who stand with Him are called, elect, and faithful.**

**“Chosen”— EKLEKTOS ... and faithful. Clearly the Believers!**

I think we can get the idea. **The term “elect” is never applied in the New Testament to the Jewish nation — ALWAYS TO BELIEVERS!**

**That’s the natural reading of Matthew 20:31 — the Believers or Saints are Raptured AFTER THE TRIBULATION!**

**They have another “reason” given for a Pre-Trib Rapture is “The Church” is said to be “missing” from the Book of Revelation.**

So ... here’s a book all about end-time prophecy — and The Church is not there! Why? Because it has been “Raptured” away!

**The argument is that The Rapture takes place in Revelation 4:1.**

### **Revelation 4:1**

**1 After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet**

speaking with me, saying, “**Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.**”

John is invited into Heaven just before major prophetic events get underway. **The claim is that John “represents” the whole Church — being Raptured into Heaven!**

And allegedly that’s why the word “Church” doesn’t appear again (until Revelation Chapter 22).

**But Revelation 4:1 doesn’t mention any “Church”?**

And **John wasn’t “Raptured”**. His body was still on the earth — his visions were all “in the spirit” — verse 2.

**Revelation 4:2**

2 **Immediately I was in the Spirit**; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne.

The word “Church” appears frequently in Revelation Chapters 1–3 (Letters to the Churches in Ephesus ... Smyrna ... Pergamos ... etc). Then — it’s missing. **Yes — the word “Church” is missing — but there are plenty of references to God’s people — the Saints.**

**They’re still around!**

**Revelation 6:9-11**

9 When He opened the fifth seal, **I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.** (*Martyrs*)

10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”

11 Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.

**Those martyred for The Word of God ... testimony ... servants ... brethren. In other words — the Saints! OF COURSE THAT IS THE CHURCH!**

**Revelation 12:10-12**

10 Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our **brethren**, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.

11 And **they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony**, and they did not love their lives to the death.

12 Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.”

**Our brethren — overcoming by the blood of the Lamb ... and ... the word of their testimony. Clearly a description of the Saints — The Church!!**

**Revelation 12:16-17**

16 But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth.

17 And **the dragon was enraged with the woman**, and **he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ**.

**The Devil makes war on those “who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ”. These people are the Saints — The Church!**

**Revelation 13:5-7**

5 And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months.

6 Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.

7 It was granted to him **to make war with the saints and to overcome them**. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.

**The Beast makes war with the Saints (aka The Church!)**

**Revelation 19:6-8**

6 And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!

7 Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for **the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.**"

8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

**Jesus' wife ... or ... bride — is of course The Church.**

So ... although the word "Church" might not appear in the Book of Revelation in Chapters 4–20 — **there are multiple references to God's people — Martyrs ... Commandment-keepers ... Brethren ... Saints ... Christ's Bride.** (We've only looked at a few).

The scriptures are plain. **Jesus comes for His Saints after The Great Tribulation.**

Attempts to redefine the "Elect" of Matthew Chapter 24 to be the ethnic Jewish nation — or claim that The Church has disappeared from the Book of Revelation — IS JUST NONSENSE!

Does it really matter? Or just a "technical" issue?

**The problem is that many sincere churchgoers are being deceived.**

They genuinely believe they will be caught away before The Tribulation. They will never encounter the Beast or Antichrist.

**They will be shocked and totally ill-prepared for what is coming.**

**Their pastors are preaching “Smooth Things” — LIES!**

**Jeremiah 14:11-16**

11 Then **the LORD said to me**, “Do not pray for this people, for their good. (*Don't intercede*)

12 When they fast, **I will not hear their cry**; and when they offer burnt offering and grain offering, I will not accept them. **But I will consume them by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence.**”

13 Then I said, “Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, the **false** prophets say to them, ‘You shall not see the sword, nor shall you have famine, but I will give you assured peace in this place.’ ”

14 And **the LORD said to me**, “**The prophets prophesy lies in My name. I have not sent them, commanded them, nor spoken to them; they prophesy to you a false vision, divination, a worthless thing, and the deceit of their heart.**

15 **Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the prophets who prophesy in My name, whom I did not send**, and who say, ‘Sword and famine shall not be in this land’—‘**By sword and famine those prophets shall be consumed!**’

16 And the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword; they will have no one to bury them—them nor their wives, their sons nor their daughters—for I will pour their wickedness on them.’

**Jeremiah 16:19**

19 O LORD, my strength and my fortress,  
My refuge in the day of affliction,  
The Gentiles shall come to You  
From the ends of the earth and say,

**“Surely our fathers have inherited lies,  
Worthlessness and unprofitable things.”**

**THEY PREACH A FALSE VISION. IT'S WORTHLESS!**

**WE NEED TO BE WATCHING — AND READY FOR THE END-TIMES.**