

“If there is a ‘proof text’ for the pretribulational position, it is Rev 3:10.” (David Winfrey)

- **Why bother studying eschatology?**

1. It is in the Bible.
2. The apostle Paul tells us in 2Tim. 3:16 that "All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable".
3. The study of eschatology is especially important in our present day where we are exposed to a plethora of unbiblical teaching on the end times.
4. How we arrive at conclusions for our eschatology will affect our interpretation of other important biblical texts.
5. To gain an understanding of the end times is to quench anxiety and to strengthen hope.

- **OVERVIEW OF ESCHATOLOGICAL SYSTEM:**

- **Premillennialism**

Derived from a plain, normal, straightforward, literal understanding. Jesus will return as King to judge the world (Rev 19) and establish his kingdom on earth for 1,000 (Rev 20). Also see Daniel 2, Ps 2, Zech 14, Ezek 36-39 — Christ will reign on the earth as King from Zion for 1,000 years. God’s unilateral, unbreakable covenant with Israel still is in effect. God will restore Israel, save her & Christ will reign as king on earth in the future.

- **Tribulation**

7yr period of wrath (Revelation). Called “The Day of the LORD” (19x in OT) - Isa 2:23; ch.13; Ezek 13:5; Joel 1, Amos 5, Obad.15, Zeph 1)

So bad & so intense is this period that Jesus said to the disciples that when you (= ‘that generation alive at that time’) see all these things, you know that he is near. Thus, the prediction is that the generation alive at that time would see all these things in the pattern that came near to the point of appearing. It’s a short, brief, intense period of outpouring of divine wrath [called the “Day of the LORD”].

It is the Book of Revelation that offers the most extensive treatment of the theme of the Tribulation found anywhere in the Bible (Rev 6-19 details the Trib events clearly).

• **Rapture**

This immediate, quick, sudden, instantaneous catching up of believers is different than the 2nd coming of Christ in the clouds when every eye will see Him. The FINAL coming (2nd coming) is seen in 2 stages/phases -- rapture before the TRIB then 2nd coming itself at the end of the TRIB.

“[The pre-tribulation rapture view] It’s the view that the rapture (the catching up of resurrected & translated believers to meet the coming Christ in the air and be with him forever, precedes the tribulation, the time of trouble & judgment. At the CLIMAX of the tribulation, Christ will visibly descend to the earth with his saints to begin his millennial reign.

In this view, the rapture is pretribulational because it takes place before the tribulation. (Craig Blaising).

THESIS — Let’s zoom in more with Revelation 3:10 and see the PROMISE OF REMOVAL before the hour of judgment begins:

✓ **Giver of the promise - Christ Himself... (7)**

✓ **Recipients of the promise -- You (v.10a)**

First, this promise applies not only to one local assembly existing in the days of the apostle John but to the entire church of Jesus Christ. The constant refrain in all seven messages from Christ to these churches is “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22).

Second, the trial which is coming is not local, but is “about to come upon the whole world.” The persecutions of the past were usually limited to one country or area. This trial must refer to the tribulation to come when all the world will be “amazed and follow after the beast” (13:3), and all who worship him will come under the wrath of God (13:8; 14:9-11). (Gerald Stanton)

✓Glory / meaning of the promise -- out of the hour of testing that comes upon the world (10a)

✓What is the **Hour Of Testing**? The Hour of Testing is the particular period (not moment, or an instance of suffering, but a period/duration of testing)

✓This is the period that is **about to come** >> hasn’t come yet; but it’s ABOUT to come.

✓The ***Day of the LORD* (the time of testing)**: Ezek 30:3; Joel 1:15; 2:11, 31; 3:14!; Amos 5:18-20; Zeph 1:7-14!!! *See the cosmic testing, the span, scope, extremity of this “judgment/testing from God”.*

✓Paul also encourages believers with the assurance that they would not experience *this testing — this period of judgment — this future era of the coming wrath of God* (1 Thess 1:10,5:9).

The Day of the Lord is a period of time in which God will deal with wicked men directly and dramatically in fearful judgment. Today a man may be a blasphemer of God, an atheist, can denounce God and teach bad doctrine. Seemingly God does nothing about it. But the day designated in Scripture as “the day of the Lord” is coming when God will punish human sin, and He will deal in wrath and in judgment with a Christ-rejecting world. One thing we are sure of, that God in His own way will bring every soul into judgment. (John Walvoord)

✓Purpose of the promise -to test those who dwell on the earth (v.10b)

✓Those who “dwell on the earth” — refers to unbelievers — see: **Revelation 6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 13:8, 12, 14; 17:2, 8** = *the phrase *only* refers to unbelievers; unsaved; ungodly; unrepentant!*

“Those who dwell upon the earth” —

Renald Showers affirms:

“All of these 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). The fourth bowl will cause people to be scorched with great heat; the fifth

Revelation 3:10 — “Rapture Hope: Jesus’ Promise to His Church to Be Kept From the Future Hour of Judgment!”

bowl will cause excruciating pain; and the sixth bowl will cause hailstones weighing approximately 94 pounds each to bombard people. Although they will recognize that these are God’s wrath judgments, the earth-dwellers will blaspheme Him rather than repent (Rev. 16:1▶, 7▶, 8-11▶, 21▶).”

✓Results of the promise - vv 11-13 ---

- ✓Persevere & don’t give up! (11) *perseverance!*
- ✓Overcome & look to future glory! (12) *perspective!*
- ✓Listen & hear what Christ says to you! (13) *pay attention!*

“If Christ will come for His church before any predicted time of trouble, Christians can regard His coming as an imminent daily expectation. From a practical standpoint, the doctrine of (pre-trib rapture) has tremendous implications.” (John Walvoord)

A summary — Here are 8 evidences for a pre-tribulation rapture position:

1. The church is not mentioned in Rev 6-19 as being on earth (in fact, Rev is silent about the church in Chaps 4-19)
2. the rapture is rendered inconsequential if it is Post-Tribulational (why have separation of sheep and goats, Matt 25, if they’ve just been separated by the rapture at the end of the Trib)
3. The epistles contain NO preparatory warnings of an impending tribulation for church age believers
4. 1 Thess 4:13-18 demands a pre trip rapture (The Thessalonians were grieved b/c of the dead loved ones b/c they thought the loved ones missed the rapture; they had no fears of the coming Tribulation)
5. John 14:1-3 and 1 Thess 4:13-18 are parallels with one another
6. The nature of events at Christ’s posttribulational coming radically differs from that of the rapture (compare 1 Thess 4:13-18 & 1 Cor 15:50-58 with 2nd coming texts such as Matt 24-25; Rev 19:11-21, one sees many differences and distinguishing marks in these comings)
7. Revelation 3:10 PROMISES that he church will be removed prior to Daniel’s 70th week (Christ promises to keep his people OUT OF (Greek: “ek” — out of) the hour of trial (2 Cor 1.10 and 1

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Thess 1.10 also speak of being kept out of and separated completely out of the midst of something).

8. 1 Thessalonians 5:9-10 promises the NT Church that we are not *appointed* for the future “Day of the LORD” — the time of God’s wrath — but for obtaining salvation through Christ’s crosswork. It’s a promise of being delivered *before* the day of the Lord begins.

A proper, biblical, robust eschatology/hope results in:

- Holiness (2 Pet 3:11)
- Comfort (1 Thess 4:18)
- Hope (1 Pet 1:3-4)
- Assurance (1 John 2:28-29)
- Urgency (Rev 22:20)
- Missions (Acts 1:8)
- Worship (Luke 12:35-40)
- Expectancy / anticipation = imminency

So let us say with John: “Come, Lord Jesus” (Rev 22.20)

Rejoice in glorious hope!
 Our Lord and judge shall come
 And take His servants up
 To their eternal home:
 Lift up your heart,
 Lift up your voice!
 Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!
 — Charles Wesley