

[Pre-Trib In My Inbox](#)

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By [Nathan Jones](#)

As Web Minister for Lamb & Lion Ministries, I get the blessing of responding each day to an in-boxful of questions related to Bible prophecy. Many of these questions come from people wanting to know about the return of Jesus Christ. They want to know when the Rapture will happen — before, during, or at the end of the Tribulation. Here's how I answer:

The timing of the Rapture — the removal of the Church in relation to the seven years of the Tribulation — confuses a lot of people because there are a lot of good theories out there as to when it will happen. People ask, "Will it happen before the Tribulation... the middle of the Tribulation... at the end of the Tribulation?"

For me, the best thing I ever did was to evaluate which theory has the most biblical support. I sat down and wrote out all the different proof texts that each of the views use. I ended up writing a six-part article series titled [Why I Believe in a Pre-Trib Rapture](#) to help me present the results of my biblical search — that the Bible overwhelmingly makes an argument for a Pre-Tribulation Rapture. In those articles I presented eleven different arguments as to why a Pre-Tribulation Rapture makes more sense than the other timing theories. The following are a few of those arguments.

Imminency

One of the most important arguments for a Pre-Tribulation Rapture is the imminency of Christ's Return. The verses on the Rapture ([Jn. 14:1-14](#); [1 Cor. 15:51-58](#); [1 Thes. 4:13-18](#)) tell us that nothing has to happen before the Rapture for it to occur. It could occur at any time. But, when we look at the Second Coming verses ([Zech. 14:1-12](#); [Matt. 24:29-31](#); [Mk. 13:24-27](#); [Lk. 21:25-27](#); Rev. 19) there are all sorts of events that have to happen before Jesus returns to the Earth — world devastation, the Antichrist, a one world government, and so on. So, the imminency in the timing of the Rapture tells us that nothing has to happen before it does, which also tells me that it is a separate event and it has to happen before the events of the Tribulation.

Trumpets

There are a number of different timing views, one such is the Mid-Tribulation Rapture view. Supporters of this view believe the Rapture hinges upon the sounding of the "*last trumpet*" ([1 Cor. 15:52](#)) and equate that trumpet as the Seventh Trumpet Judgment of God that is blown mid-way during the Tribulation (Rev. 11).

To recap the order of the judgments during the seven years of the Tribulation — it begins with the first four Seal and all seven of the Trumpet Judgments during the first 3 1/2 years of the Tribulation, then the last three Seal and all seven of the Bowl/Vial Judgments during the second 3 1/2 years.

I believe the Jewish feasts are God's way of showing that the "*last trumpet*" will most likely be the last Feast of Trumpets during the Church Age. The trumpet heard at the Rapture should not be confused with the last trumpet of the Trumpet Judgments.

That God would strangely leave the Church to have to suffer through half the Tribulation just doesn't make sense. Why doesn't God either take us out at the beginning or just leave us to suffer throughout the entire seven years? To remove us at the mid-point seems rather indiscriminate.

Heavenly Bodies

Then there is the view that the Rapture happens at the end of the Tribulation, called the Post-Tribulation Rapture. The most glaring problem with this timing view is that when Jesus returns at the Rapture He will change the believers' earthly bodies to the glorified bodies we are going to live in forever. If the believers u-turned and returned right back to Earth (for the Post-Trib view doesn't see the Rapture and the Second Coming as separate events), then who lives on into the Millennial Kingdom in human bodies that are capable of bearing children? Glorified bodies are like angels' bodies in that they will never reproduce. Because of this discrepancy, the Post-Tribulation Rapture view is totally unworkable.

Wrath

Then there is the Pre-Wrath Rapture view, which places the timing of the Rapture at the last quarter of the Tribulation, about five and a half years into the Tribulation. This view holds that believers in Christ will have to endure the Seal and Trumpet Judgments because they say those judgments are from Man and Satan, but believers will be exempt from the seven Bowl/Vial Judgments (Rev. 16) because they say those judgments are straight from God.

But, wasn't it Jesus who opened up the very first seal that started the judgments? [Revelation 6:1](#) tells us this is so. And, [Revelation 8:2](#) tell us that the trumpets for the Trumpet Judgments were handed out before God, clearly indicating that the wrath again comes from God Himself. [Revelation 15:1](#) goes on to tell us that the Bowl/Vial Judgments complete God's wrath, not begin it. Revelation makes it crystal clear that the wrath poured out on the Earth from the very beginning of the Tribulation comes from God, making null the foundational point of the Pre-Wrath Rapture view that God's wrath comes only with the Bowl/Vial Judgments near the end of the Tribulation.

Deliverance

One verse that comes to mind when discussing God's wrath poured out during the Tribulation is [1 Thessalonians 1:10](#). This verse says that we are *"to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead — Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath."* The Church is promised here and in other verses ([Lk. 21:36](#); [Rom. 5:9](#); [1 Thes. 5:9](#); [Rev. 3:10](#)) that we are going to be delivered from the wrath that is to come. And, since the Tribulation is about the pouring out of God's wrath upon this Earth, why would believers in Christ even be around then? We will be taken out to be saved from that wrath, just as these verses promise.

Suffering

A number of Christians who don't hold to the Pre-Tribulation Rapture view point out that Christians have been suffering for 2,000 years. Christians were thrown to the lions in Caesar's time. Today, we have news reports from Pakistan and India that Muslims and Hindus are burning Christian houses and burning believers alive. "Why shouldn't we also

suffer as well?" they ask. But, the Tribulation is a different set apart time like the Flood was for the pouring out of God's wrath upon the Earth in judgment for man's continued rebellion against Him. God's wrath on Earth during the Flood and then the Tribulation are specially set apart times compared to the day-to-day suffering all believers experience.

It is true, believers in Christ are not promised that we will be free of tribulation and increasing persecution. But, there is the tribulation we all face to varying degrees and then there's *the* Tribulation when half of humanity will die during the first 3 1/2 years. This will be a tribulation unlike the world has ever seen.

Escapism

One of the accusations that comes quite often from people who don't hold to a Pre-Tribulation Rapture is that we are merely escapists, unwilling to truly suffer for the Lord. We are accused of making up a fantasy escape plan to avoid the unpleasantness of the difficult times ahead.

In reply, I can only say, "Amen!" You know, it is one thing to suffer under the hand of man or even under the hand of Satan, but to suffer under the hand of the living God, well, that's a terrifying concept. Who could survive? As [Revelation 6:17](#) states, *"For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"*

I can be assured it is okay to be an escapist because the Bible tells us I have no choice in the matter. Jesus will come to take His Bride the Church up to Heaven before He pours out His wrath upon the world during the Tribulation.

[Ephesians 5:6](#) tells us to *"Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient."* The Church has been cleaned, they are no longer disobedient and deserving of God's wrath. [Romans 5:9](#) assures us that *"since we have now been justified by his [Christ's] blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!"*

Noah was an escapist. Lot was an escapist. And so, it is not a bad thing to be called an escapist. Jesus in [Luke 21:36](#) even instructs us to pray for an escape, saying *"be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man."* Well, if Jesus told me to pray to escape, then I am going to pray to escape.

Now, should I be willing to die for Jesus Christ? Most certainly, yes! But, that doesn't mean that I have to go through the Tribulation to somehow prove my mettle to God.

No, the Bible overwhelmingly supports the timing of the Rapture as happening before the Tribulation.