

# Pre-Trib Rapture

By Scott Huckaby

5/17/2026



## **For Discussion: What is the Pretribulation Rapture?**

(raptureready.com; July 19, 2016)

<https://www.raptureready.com/2016/07/19/pretribulation-rapture/>

## **What is the rapture of the church?**

It is an event that will take place in the near future. Jesus will come in the air, catch up the Church from the earth, and then return to heaven with the Church.

*For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.* (1 Thess, 4:16-18).

*Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.* (1 Cor. 15:51-53).

## **From where do we get the term rapture?**

The word “rapture” comes from 1 Thess 4:17 where it says we will be “caught up.” The words “caught up” are translated from the Greek word harpazo, which means “to carry off,” “snatch up,” or “grasp hastily.”

- harpazo became the Latin word raptus; and, raptus became the English word “rapture.”

## **When will the rapture occur?**

Jesus said we could not know the day and hour of that event; Matthew 25:13 says Jesus will return at an unknown time.

- This is contrasted with the return of the Lord at the end of the Tribulation which has a set time: Revelation 12:6 indicates that the Jews will have to wait on the Lord 1,260 days, starting when the Antichrist stands in the Temple of God and declares himself to be God (2 Thes 2:4).

## **What does the parable of the faithful & evil servants in Luke 12 tell us about when Jesus will return?**

*Luke 12:36 – you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately*

When Christ returns to earth, He will be returning from a wedding. In Revelation 19:7-8, we read about the marriage itself between Christ and the church.

- The marriage supper takes place before the marriage.
- According to Jewish custom, the marriage contract, which often includes a dowry, is drawn up first. The contract parallels the act of faith we use when we trust Jesus to be our Savior.
- The dowry is His life, which was used to purchase us.
- When it’s time for the wedding, the groom goes to the bride’s house unannounced. She meets him, and then he takes her to his father’s house.

This precisely correlates with the events according to the pre-trib scenario. Jesus, the Groom, comes down from heaven and calls up the Church, His Bride. After meeting in the air, He and His Bride return to His Father’s house, heaven.

- The marriage supper itself will take place there, while down here on earth the final events of the tribulation will be playing out.
- After the marriage supper of Jewish tradition, the bride and groom are presented to the world as man and wife. This corresponds to the time when Jesus returns to earth accompanied by an army “*clothed in fine linen, white and clean*” (Rev 19:14).

## **How does Scripture characterize the Tribulation?**

*Jeremiah 30:7 – Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it; and it is the time of Jacob’s trouble, but he shall be saved out of it.*

The Bible refers to the tribulation as a time of trouble for the Jews. This time of trouble will come just before the Lord returns to save His people Israel.

### **How do we know that God's focus is on Israel during the 7-year Tribulation?**

Daniel 9:24 – *Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city*

The first 69 weeks of years have been fulfilled culminating in the Messiah Jesus going to the cross. Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week of years is yet to be fulfilled and it corresponds with the Tribulation.

- The church had no part in the first 69 weeks of years so we should not expect it to not have any part of the 70<sup>th</sup> week of years.
- Scripture never mentions that the Tribulation is meant to be a time of testing for the church.

### **Who is "He" who must be taken away before the Tribulation can begin?**

2 Thessalonians 2:7 – *For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way.*

Before the Antichrist can be revealed, a certain "He" must be taken out of the way. This "He" is widely thought to be the Holy Spirit.

- Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would never leave the Church, so the Spirit's evil-restraining ministry is removed from the earth with the church.

### **What is the purpose of God's wrath during the Tribulation?**

God's wrath is poured out on an ungodly world to prepare Israel and the nations for the Millennial Kingdom. In the context of the Tribulation:

1 Thessalonians 5:9 – *For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ*

Pre-trib believers interpret this as meaning that Christians will be removed from the earth. Post-trib believers say this means that God will protect Christians during the tribulation and pour this wrath out on the unbelievers only.

- But that idea contradicts Revelation 13:7 in which the Antichrist is given power to make war with the saints and to overcome them.
- A post-trib view would make God's promise of protection from wrath into a lie.

### **Is there a distinction between God's wrath and the wrath of man or Satan during the Tribulation?**

Certainly, the wrath of man and Satan are real and active during the Tribulation, but they operate under God's sovereign control as instruments of His divine wrath, which encompasses the entire Tribulation period.

- This is clearly stated in the Book of Revelation, where the judgments—such as the seal, trumpet, and bowl judgments—are all expressions of divine wrath. Jesus Christ, as the Lamb, is the one who opens the seals and initiates these judgments, demonstrating that God is sovereignly orchestrating this time of judgment (Revelation 6).

### **How did the accounts of Noah and Lot reveal a principle supporting the pre-trib rapture?**

The tribulation period is compared to the times of Noah and Lot by Jesus in Luke 17:28.

- The circumstances that the Noah and Lot situations have in common are the removal of the righteous and the judgment of the unbelievers.
- From these two accounts, we see that God prefers to remove His own when danger is involved.

### **What other types in the Old Testament support the idea of a pre-trib rapture?**

- Enoch was raptured before the flood of Noah's day
- Joseph as a type of Christ married a Gentile bride before the 7 years of famine, a type of the Tribulation.
- Daniel, a type of the church was nowhere in the story as the three Hebrew men, a type of Israel, went into the fiery furnace, a type of the Tribulation.

### **How do the following Scripture passages indicate that the rapture has to happen before the Tribulation?**

**Luke 21:36** – *Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.*

- Alternatives to the pre-trib rapture put the Church in the dubious position of looking for the Antichrist rather than our Lord. Jesus said we should watch for Him, not the Beast.
- Also, we should pray that we may be counted worthy to escape the wrath of God and stand before our Savior. Thus, the rapture happens before the Tribulation

**Matthew 24:44** – *you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect*

- Pre-Trib is the only view that allows for immanency of the Lord's coming per His teaching.

To live ready for the any-moment return of Jesus for the church is powerful incentive for holy living:

1 John 3:2-3 – *we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.*

**Matthew 24:38-39** – *For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.*

- Jesus also represented the rapture as occurring during business as usual... this will hardly be the case during the Tribulation.

**Rev 3:10** – *Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth*

- The faithful will be kept from the hour of trial which shall come on the whole world... thus the rapture has to happen before the Tribulation.

**Rev 4:1** – *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.*

- The chronological order of the book of Revelation (Rev 1:19) puts the rapture between the Church Age (Rev 2-3) and the Tribulation (Rev 5-19).

**1 Thessalonians 4:16-17** – *the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air*

- The Apostle Paul certainly understood the Rapture to be imminent even during his day because he included himself among those who might not face death.

**1 Thess 4:17-18** – *Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. **Therefore comfort one another with these words.***

- Paul went on to say the doctrine of the Rapture was intended to be encouraging. Believing that we have to die or face the Tribulation before we are resurrected is anything but encouraging.

**What applications do we see from our discussion today?**

- The pre-trib rapture timing has the most support in Scripture with no conflicts.
- Other rapture timing perspectives are only supported by interpretations of Scripture taken out of context (eisegeses) and have a myriad of issues.
- Since the rapture can occur at any time, we should live ready for it by knowing Jesus as our Savior.