

4

WHY ARE WE POST-TRIB?

We have just examined some of the major flaws in the pre-tribulation rapture teaching. We have responded to many of the arguments given by its major proponents, and we sincerely hope you see where they are misguided. We affirm the opposite view, which is that Believers will remain on Planet Earth during the Tribulation period. We do not believe that it is the pattern of Scripture, especially the Torah, for God to give His people an “easy escape,” but rather for them to be protected by Him and rely on Him during times of distress. Whether many pre-tribulationists wish to admit it or not, *their fear of the Last Days and of the times to come* is what largely motivates them—not necessarily their faith in the Lord. It would be my personal hope, though, that I am wrong in this assertion.

It is not without reservation that we explain why we hold to a post-tribulational view of the gathering of the saints. This is by far the most controversial position one could take, as we are **saying that Believers may be forced to give up their lives one day for the cause of the Messiah**

and face the antimessiah/antichrist. Some pre-tribulationists say that a post-tribulation view of the end-times does not encourage spiritual growth and creates “lukewarm Believers.” This is absolutely ludicrous considering the fact that many of us, including myself, may one day have to be martyred for the cause of Yeshua. Being a “lukewarm” Believer is hardly something that I would consider myself to be.

As a Messianic Believer, I know that it is important to hold to the testimony of Yeshua and keep the commandments of God (Revelation 12:17; 14:12), something that the Tribulation saints do, and a significant number of pre-tribulationists today do not necessarily do. Are post-tribulationism’s pre-trib accusers willing to face the antimessiah and be martyred? Are they willing to live a set-apart lifestyle and heed the messages of God’s Torah? Even though our ministry is post-trib, we do not instinctively want to experience the Tribulation. *We hope that we are wrong!* However, Scripture shows us that we are (probably) not wrong, and we pray that we may have the strength to endure the times ahead—whatever happens, and even if all we may face is general tribulation.

As emphasized throughout this publication, Outreach Israel Ministries and Messianic Apologetics affirm a belief in a post-tribulation gathering of the saints for two specific reasons:

1. We **do not believe** that “the Church” and Israel are separate entities. We believe that God has only one group of chosen ones, the Commonwealth of Israel (Ephesians 2:11-12) or the Israel of God (Galatians 6:16),
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composing Jewish and non-Jewish Believers, with non-Jewish Believers grafted-in to Israel's olive tree by faith (Romans 11:16-17). As the Tribulation period is in actuality the Seventieth Week of Israel, and as Believers are a part of Israel's polity, we will all remain on Planet Earth during its duration.¹

2. Yeshua the Messiah plainly tells us that He returns “**after the tribulation** of those days” (Matthew 24:29-31; cf. Mark 13:24-27; Luke 21:27-28).

Dispensationalists who see “the Church” and Israel as separate entities obviously do not consider that non-Jewish Believers in Israel's Messiah will be participants, directly (or even indirectly), involved in Israel's prophecies, and therefore they see themselves removed from the Seventieth Week of Israel. However, if Believers *are a part of the qahal/ekklēsia of Israel*, then the Tribulation is indeed for all of us. The Messiah Himself attests,

“But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. And He will send forth His

¹ For a further analysis of ecclesiology, consult the author's publication, *Are Non-Jewish Believers Really a Part of Israel?* (forthcoming 2013).

angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other” (Matthew 24:29-31).

When one reads the entire chapter of Matthew 24 in context, one cannot come to the conclusion that the pre-tribulation rapture is a teaching of our Lord. If the event in Matthew 24:29-31 (cf. Mark 13:24-27; Luke 21:27-28) is not “the rapture” as it is commonly called, as the saints are gathered into the sky, then what is it? We choose to stand on Yeshua the Messiah’s words which speak of a post-tribulational gathering of all the saints, and interpret all other words *through His words!* The Apostle Paul himself said that correct teaching is properly viewed through the Messiah’s teachings (1 Timothy 6:3).

It can easily be argued that many Christians have been deceived by the pre-tribulation rapture teaching, especially in view of their attitude and approach to the Last Days. What will they do if their doctrine is wrong and they find themselves in the Tribulation period and its hardships? Will they stand for the Messiah—possibly having to lose their lives? Or will they join the antimessiah/antichrist? *It is not our job to judge the heart intent of the pre-tribulationist.* Rather, it is the pre-tribulationist’s job to study and evaluate whether or not this view is truly upheld by the Word of God, and take their questions and concerns before Him.

Our Heavenly Father is all-powerful and all-knowing. We do not claim to know the exact time of Yeshua’s return—nor do we believe it is justified to try to calculate the time of His return—but we do see major problems with the widely accepted pre-tribulation rapture teaching. If you are a pre-

tribulationist, I urge you to reconsider your position.

These are our conclusions, as a ministry, based on Scripture, prayer, and cautious reasoning. If indeed our position is proven to be wrong and there is a pre-tribulation rapture, **then we will gladly accept it.** As many have observed, “I hope for the best, but I prepare for the worst.” But if we are right, and you are a pre-tribulationist, you are likely to have to answer for it.

Consider what you have read and examine it. Are our conclusions correct? Challenge us where you feel we have gone wrong and we will certainly be open to hearing you. Give us additional reasons that we can add to future editions of this analysis. Give us ideological support for pre-tribulationism that is not escapist, and show us where Yeshua telling us He gathers the saints after the Tribulation is out of place.
