

“Are The Saints Scheduled to Go Through The Tribulation?”

There has been much abuse of prophetic Scripture, with many foolish, and sensational, speculations masquerading under the title of "*prophecy*." And because, imagined future events, or fixed dates, have brought discredit upon the whole subject of God-inspired prophecy, the necessity of a sane approach to prophecy is all the greater.

In spite of all these extravagances, it is our responsibility to discover, "*what saith the Lord*."

The reader is invited to take the views of this study and submit them to the test of Scripture and, if in his judgment, they are not in accordance with the teaching thereof, he is at liberty to reject them.

However, because neither the reader's judgment, nor this study, can lay claim to infallibility, the main purpose of the following thesis is that the reader may be led, by a perusal of this subject, to a deeper interest, and a more profound study of that which is infallible...*the Word of God*.

Some dangers in the study of prophecy are the following:

(1) **CURIOSITY** - Some people delight in hearing "*some new thing*" (Acts 17:21). Prophecy is neither just a curiosity shop nor simply a "*hobby*" for one to indulge in once in awhile.

(2) **PRIDE** - Some people become spiritually proud because they are able to distinguish between the beasts in Revelation, or Daniel, or because they are able to interpret Daniel's image . . . they feel they possess a spirituality that puts them on a superior plane than those who have not been taught to so distinguish these things.

(3) **FELLOWSHIP** -The understanding of prophecy *should never be a basis of fellowship between believers* - the Person, and work, of Jesus Christ is our basis of fellowship - not whether we agree with Pre-Tribulation, Mid-Tribulation, or Post-Tribulation!

1. The Imminence of Christ's Return to Earth

Nothing is more clearly taught in the New Testament than the **IMMINENCE** of the coming of Christ. Five times in one chapter, Christ stresses that the time of His coming *will not be known* (Matthew 24: 36, 38, 44 and 50.) This teaching is also found in Mark 13:33, 35-36 and Luke 21:34-35.

The apostles anticipated the coming of Christ as something that could occur at any time, even during their life time, (See 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 4:17-18; Titus 2:13; Philippians 3:20; 1 John 2:28 and Revelation 22:20.)

The Tribulation is such a definite, well-defined period of time that any Bible student who lives during the Tribulation period can know when it begins, how long it will last, and when it will come to an end.

The great Tribulation will begin with "*the abomination of desolation*," when the Man of Sin will enter the temple at Jerusalem claiming to be God, and with the Antichrist breaking his covenant with the Jews and his command that they worship him - (Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15 and 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4.) It will last for one of Daniel's 70th week - or 3 and 1/2 years - (Daniel 7:25; 9:27; Revelation 11:2-3 and 12:6 and 14.)

Conclusion: To teach that the Saints will go through the Tribulation period is to nullify what the Bible teaches about the imminent coming of Christ.

2. The Purpose

The Word of God distinguishes the purpose of God for Israel from His purpose for believers

in this present age. God now reveals His grace to all alike, to His body of believers -[the *Bride of Christ*] - which is a company distinct from Israel's program and promises. During the Tribulation period, God will resume His program for Israel in preparation for His millennial reign - (Acts 15:13-18 and Romans chapter 11.)

Conclusion: Because the Tribulation period is about God's dealing with Israel, then we should not expect that the Saints would be there!

3. Removal of the Holy Spirit

The Antichrist cannot be revealed until the Holy Spirit...(that is: *in the sense of His working through the Church*) is taken out at the Rapture of the Church. And then, **AFTER THE RAPTURE**, this "*Man of Sin*" will be revealed and the Tribulation will begin - 2 Thessalonians 2:1-8.

Conclusion: If the Holy Spirit...(in the sense of His working through the Church)...is "*removed*" during the Tribulation, then the Saints cannot be here!

4. Revelation 4:1

Here, in this chapter...which depicts the close of the Church Age..."*after these things* (that is, the things prophesied of in the 2nd and 3rd chapters of Revelation)...John sees in his vision an "*open door*" and he hears a voice resembling a trumpet. He then is summoned to leave earth and "*come up hither*," and he tells us that, "**IMMEDIATELY**", he "*was in the Spirit*." At this point, John begins to describe what he saw in heaven, and it is evident that what he beheld there indicates that the Rapture of the Saints had prophetically taken place and that the stage was being set for the final acts of the great drama of Revelation - *The Tribulation!* The Rapture of the Saints is foreshadowed by the bodily ascension of John. There is a marked change of God's attitude from that of mercy to one of judgment.

The word "*church*," mentioned 19 times in chapters 2 and 3, is not mentioned again until chapter 22:6-21. There is not one "*earmark*" of the Church during the fulfillment of chapters 4 through 19, while, on the other hand, evidence of Israel is seen everywhere in Revelation after 4:1. The statement "*things which must be hereafter*" refers to the third division of the Revelation - 1:19. John is instructed to divide the book he was to write into three parts:

- (1) *The things which he HAD SEEN...*that is, his vision of the glorified Son of Man in the midst of the golden lamp-stands
- (2) *The things which ARE...*that is, a prophetic outline of Church history all the way from the beginning... down to the very end...of the Church Age.
- (3) *The things that are to be AFTER THESE THINGS.*

Conclusion: Because the Rapture takes place in chapter 4, verse 1, of Revelation...and the Tribulation takes place in chapters 6 through 19...the Saints will not...cannot...be here during the Tribulation!

5. The 24 Elders

1. In Scripture, Christ and men are the only ones seen as being crowned with crowns and sitting on thrones...(The Greek word translated '*seats*', in verse 4, is the same Greek word that is translated "*throne*" in verse 2).
2. In the book of Revelation, the words "*White Raiment*" is used only of Christ and the Saints.
3. In Scripture, angels are always distinguished from men.
4. References to the earth in the speeches of these 24 Elders connect them to earth.

5. In God's Word, this Greek word which is translated as "**Elders**" never applies to angels, but, rather, **only** to men!
6. These 24 Elders officiate in a **priestly** capacity (5:8).
7. In Revelation 5:8-10, we see these 24 Elders singing praises to God whereas, in Scripture, angels are never seen '*singing*'.
8. In Revelation 5:9, these 24 Elders are referred to as "**redeemed**" beings.
9. In Revelation 5:10 with 1:6, these 24 Elders are called "**kings and priests**".
10. In Revelation 19:5, these 24 Elders are referred to as "**the servants of God**".

Conclusion: The only natural...and logical...understanding of the 24 Elders is that they are redeemed beings...representative of Raptured Saints...a view which harmonizes with all other passages concerning the elders. These 24 Elders are in heaven in the fifth chapter of Revelation - before the Tribulation period which begins in chapter six.

6. Daniel's 70th Week

In the interest of brevity, I will only mention the last - or the 70th Week - of Daniel's prophecy, which is given in Daniel 9:24-27. Note, that this prophecy has to do only with "**THY people**," that is, Daniel's people, the Jewish people!

This 70th "**WEEK**" begins with a covenant between the Antichrist and the Jews and, then, in the middle of the Week (3 1/2 years), the Antichrist breaks his covenant with the Jews and wars against them. The age in which we now live - **the Church Age** - is parenthetical, which means that it comes between the 69th and 70th, Week of Daniel's prophecy of this **Jewish** timetable.
(See Pastor Mitchell's complete notes on Daniel's 70th Week)

Conclusion: Before Daniel's 70th Week can begin, the Church Age **must** necessarily come to a close. Because the Church Age will only come to a close with the Rapture of the Saints, the Rapture must, therefore, occur **before** the Tribulation.

7. The Old Testament Types

While it is true the one cannot find a doctrine on "*types*," it is also equally true that types illustrate, or emphasize, truth.

Jesus used the flood as a type of His coming again when He stated, "*As the flood **took them** all away...one shall be taken and the other left*, (Matthew 24:37 and 42). As God took Enoch **before** the flood, so shall He take the church **before** the Tribulation.

Because...in Luke 17:28-30...the fire and brimstone did not fall upon the wicked city of Sodom until **after** Lot made his exit, Jesus also uses Lot as a type of His second coming.

Conclusion: If, Enoch...a type of the Saints...went up **before** the flood, and, also, Lot...a type of the Saints...was called out **before** God's wrath was poured out...then...God will also call His Saints "*to come up hither*" **BEFORE** the Tribulation! [God said, "*I cannot do anything...* (speaking of His judgment on Sodom) *...till thou (Lot) come up thither*,"]

8. A Comforting Hope!

The fact that John 14:1-3 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 are among many Scriptures that refer to Christ's coming as a "**blessed hope**" negates the reality that the Saints are to go through the Tribulation because, in that case, it would be better for them to die than to live until Jesus comes again.

Conclusion: For the Saints to have to go through the Tribulation would change their "**Blessed Hope**" into a fearful outlook!

9. The Necessity of an Interval

There are a number of events which occur **after** the Rapture and **before** the establishment of the millennial Kingdom which require an interval of some years duration. The Saints will be judged for rewards (2 Corinthians 5:10); there will be the "*Marriage Supper of the Lamb*," (Ephesians 5:25-27 and Revelation 19:7-9).

Conclusion: The Rapture, of necessity, must take place sometime **before** the Tribulation in order to give time for events...which God refers to...to take place.

10. The Description

One must not *minimize* the horrors of this awful period of God's wrath, the Tribulation period! Read such passages as Jeremiah 25:15-31; 30: 7, 11 and 15 through 16; Isaiah 24:1-6; Joel 1:15-20; Micah 5:15; 7:15-17; Daniel 12:1 and Matthew 24:21, together with the Tribulation chapters of Revelation (chapters 6 through 19), and one can see that nothing like this has ever happened before because it is a period which brings death to most of the earth's population and destruction to a civilization that exists at the time of the Tribulation period.

Conclusion: The Tribulation is of such character as to raise serious question whether the Church will be required to pass through it. [Those who deny the "*Rapture*" **before** the Tribulation usually deny that the Tribulation is going to be as terrifying as the Scripture describes it.]

11. The "*Falling Away*"

Keep in mind that the purpose of the second letter to the Thessalonians was to clear up their misunderstanding of Paul's first letter...which was that they were confusing "*the catching away of the Saints*" with "*the Day of Christ...or... Day of the Lord.*" Note 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3, which reads, "Concerning the... (*First*) ... coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and...(Second)...our being gathered to Him, we ask you, brothers, not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us, saying that the day of the Lord has already come. Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for **THAT** day **WILL NOT COME** until **there be, (1) a 'falling away' first** and, (2) the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction."

I am quite aware of the fact that most Bible students believe that this "*falling away*" refers `a **falling away from true doctrine**'... and that some translations even translate it as such ...however, the text does not so read!

Paul states, "*Let no man deceive you by any means for that day cannot come except...*" and then Paul lists **TWO THINGS WHICH MUST PRECEDE THE DAY OF THE LORD, namely, (1) The falling away, and (2) the revealing of the man of sin.** Paul states that these two things must come **before** the Tribulation period! Because the Greek word...translated here as "*falling away*" in the King James Version of the Bible...is the word "*apostasia*" and is preceded by a definite article, the correct meaning of the word is "*to cause to withdraw...to go away...to depart...to withdraw from.*" This Greek word is found 15 times in the New Testament and is translated "*depart*" 11 times. - (The fact that 1 Timothy 4:1 added the words "*from the faith*" to this Greek word "*apostasia*" shows clearly that, in itself, this word does not have just the idea of defection from truth).

The fact that, in the New Testament, this word "apostasia" is also translated "*fall away ...draw away...refrain ... and... forsake ...* adds to the confirmation that when this word is used in 2 Thessalonians it is best to translate it as meaning a **DEPARTURE** rather than try to "*spiritualize*" it as meaning a spiritual apostasy.

Having ascertained that the meaning of "*apostasia*" is a "*departure*" we must then go on and determine...from the context...to **what** departure this word refers to. Because the **definite article**

occurring before the word "apostasia" designates it as applying to a ***particular*** departure ...and one that was known to the writer and the recipients of the letter...and because the "departure" spoken of in 2 Thessalonians 2 is clearly **the departure of the Church**...and because the "departure" spoken of in verse 3 points to something mentioned in the immediate context...the "departure" spoken of in verse 3 must, therefore, refer to the "departure" of the Church from the earth!

In verse 7 of this same chapter, Paul refers to this "departure" as the "***departure of the Church***" and he tells us that...because it is the Holy Spirit through the ministry of the Church which is "*holding back*" the revelation of the Antichrist...the rapture of the Church (the "*taking away of the Holy Spirit's ministry through the Church*") must take place **BEFORE** the wicked one is revealed and...**with** that revelation...the Tribulation period ensues.

Conclusion: There are two things which must be fulfilled before the Day of the Lord, (that is, when Christ comes back with His Saints to set up His millennial reign): (1) *The falling away*, and (2) *The man of sin revealed*.

This "*falling away*," of necessity, must refer to the ***Rapture***...or, the ***departure*** of the Church...because to interpret it otherwise leaves us with a very incomplete picture ...because...to interpret the "*falling away*" to mean spiritual apostasy would mean that the man of sin is revealed after the occurrence of some spiritual apostasy...an interpretation that does not reconcile itself with the fact that the Rapture of the church is referred to in verses 1 and 7...and the fact that... because spiritual apostasy is current today and has always been down through the ages...to say that Christ's second coming is contingent upon "*spiritual apostasy*" is not only non-definitive, but also contradictory to God's teaching that Christ's second coming is imminent. Since 2 Thessalonians was written to show that the Rapture itself must precede the Day of the Lord...and since Scripture tells us that the only two things that precede the Day of the Lord **are** the Rapture and the revelation of the man of sin...it is, therefore, conclusive that the "*falling away*" is synonymous with ***the Rapture of the Church***."

12. Redemption of Saints' Bodies

Romans 8:22-23 states, "*We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.*"

Philippians 3:20-21 states, "*Our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables Him to bring everything under His control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like His glorious body.*"

In these passages, Paul speaks of a time when our Redemption is complete ...that is, when we are "***delivered from the bondage of corruption***,"...when our bodies are no longer liable to pain, aches, sickness, suffering and death. Paul was "*looking forward*" to this Redemption.

According to 1 Corinthians 15:49-58, this work of Redemption, while paid for at Calvary, is to be completed at the Rapture: "*And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the Man from heaven. I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed - in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true:*

'Death has been swallowed up in victory.' 'Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?' The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain."

Luke 21:28 states, "When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your **redemption** is drawing near."

Conclusion: The "**Redemption**" referred to in these verses is the same event as the Rapture and will take place when the Tribulation **begins** to come to pass.

13. Specific Promises

(1) Revelation 3:10, "Since you have kept My command to endure patiently, I will also **keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world** to test those who live on the earth." Because the word translated "**from**" here comes from the Greek word which means "**outside of**", Christ's promise to the saints is, clearly, that they are to be saved **OUT OF** Tribulation!

(2) Luke 21:25-28, "There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

(3) Luke 21:34-36, "Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a trap. For it will come upon all those who live on the face of the whole earth. 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."

(4) John 5:22-24, "Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, Who sent Him. 'I tell you the truth, whoever hears My Word and believes Him Who sent Me has eternal life and will not be 'condemned'; he has crossed over from death to life.'" Since the word "**condemned**" is translated from the same Greek word which means "**judgment**"...and since Romans 2:5 refers to the Tribulation as "*the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God*"...it seems clear that the following Scriptural passages also promise us that the saints are to be spared from God's wrath ...God's judgment:

(5) Romans 2:5-10, "But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. God will give to each person according to what he has done. To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, He will give eternal life. But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile."

(6) Romans 5:8-10, "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by His blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through Him! For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to Him through the death of His Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through His life!" The clear argument that we are to be saved from 'wrath' through

Him (Jesus Christ)... *"saved by His death"*...affirms the fact that God will not let His Saints go through the day of His wrath and share with guilty rebels the terrors of that awful day of divine visitation when *"the wrath of God shall be poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation."*

(7) 1 Thessalonians 1:10, *"Wait for his Son from heaven, Whom He raised from the dead- Jesus, Who rescues us from the coming wrath."* Note that...as in Romans 5:10...Paul, in 1 Thessalonians 1:9, connects our deliverance with the fact that Christ lives when he states, *"They...(Saints)...turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God."*

(8) 1 Thessalonians 5:8-10, *"But since we belong to the day, let us be self- controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him."*

Keep in mind that, prior to the above Scriptural passage, Paul, in 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18... states, *"According to the Lord's own Word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and 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. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words."*

It is only **after** laying this foundation of the Rapture of the Church in chapter four that Paul then precedes to give us this passage in chapter five.

Also note that the *"sudden destruction"* mentioned in 5:3 comes as suddenly as travail, and that this is in exact correspondence with Christ's own description...in Matthew 24:37...of the sudden falling of the Tribulation.

Conclusion: We have specific promises from the Word of God that the Saints shall *"escape"* the Tribulation.

14. Distinction from the Second Advent

1. The *"Rapture"* occurs when the Church is caught up to meet the Lord **in the air**, while the *"Second Advent"* occurs when Christ comes **with** His Saints to execute judgment on earth.

2. The *"Rapture"* occurs when Christ comes *"in the air"* for His Saints, while the *"Second Advent"* occurs when Christ comes to earth and *"His feet stand on the Mount of Olives"* (Zechariah 4:4).

3. The *"Rapture"* occurs when Christ comes as the *Bridegroom* to take unto Himself His Bride, while the *"Second Advent"* occurs when Christ comes **with** His Bride to rule nations.

4. The *"Rapture"* may occur **any moment**, while the *"Second Advent"* cannot occur until Antichrist is revealed and...according to the following passage... *"times and seasons fulfilled:"* Luke 21:10-27, *"Then He (Jesus) said to them: "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes, famines and pestilences in various places, and fearful events and great signs from heaven. But before all this, they will lay hands on you and persecute you. They will deliver you to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of My Name. This will result in your being But make up your mind not to worry before- hand how you will defend yourselves. For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict. You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death. All men will hate you because of Me. But not a hair of your head will perish. By standing*

firm you will gain life. `When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city get out, and let those in the country not enter the city. For this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! There will be great distress in the land and wrath against this people. They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. `There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.'"

5. The "**Rapture**" is a `mystery,' while the "**Second Advent**" has specific predictions in both Testaments.

6. The "**Rapture**" leaves creation unchanged, while the "**Second Advent**" entails changes in creation.

7. The "**Rapture**" affects only believers, while the "**Second Advent**" has its effect on all men.

8. The expectation of the Church at the "**Rapture**" is that it is to be taken into the Lord's presence, while the expectation of Israel at the "**Second Advent**" is that it is to be taken into Christ's Kingdom.

Conclusion: The contrasts between the "Rapture" and the "Second Advent" show that they are two different programs which should not be unified into one event.

15. The Church's Relation to Governments

God commanded the Church to pray for governmental authorities - (1 Timothy 2:1-4; 1 Peter 2:13-16; Titus 3:1; Romans 13:1-7), - however, because during the Tribulation period Satan will be in control of government through the personalities of the Antichrist and the false prophet, certainly, God would not instruct the Church to "pray for" them!

Conclusion: Since the Church could not subject herself to such a government, she must be delivered before this Satanic government manifests itself.

16. The Epistles

Much of the content of the Epistles addressed itself to impending persecution of the Church...and, yet, nothing is written concerning the most severe persecution men will ever know ...the Tribulation.

Conclusion: Because if the Church was going to go through the Tribulation period the writers of the Epistles would have...in their endeavor to help and guide the Church during this time...addressed some of the content of their letters to this issue, their very silence makes it evident that the Church will not go through this Tribulation period.

17. The Two Witnesses in Revelation

As John the Baptist...in preparation for Christ's first coming...announced a message of God's judgment, unless there was true repentance, likewise, during the Tribulation period, the "**Two Witnesses**"...in preparation for Christ's second coming...will announce the same message of God's judgment. The message committed to the Church is the message of God's love and grace.

Conclusion: The fact that the message announced during the Tribulation is one of judgment and preparation...in view of the King coming to set up His kingdom... indicates that the Church must no longer be present.

18. The waiting Remnant

Malachi 3:16; Ezekiel 20:33-38 and 37:11-28; Zechariah 13:8-9; Revelation 7:1-8...and many other passages of Scripture...clearly teach that when the Lord returns **to earth**...at the "**Second Advent**"...there will be a "**believing Remnant**" in Israel awaiting His return.

Matthew 24:1-13; and 25:31:40 and Luke 14:16-24 show that there will also be a multitude of believers, among the **Gentiles**, who believe, and await, Christ's return.

In order for the Lord to...at His Second Advent...fulfill the promises given to Abraham and David...as well as to all Israel...it is necessary that there be a "**believing Remnant**" over whom He can reign and to whom the covenants can be fulfilled. These go into the millennium in their **natural** bodies, saved, but not having experienced death and resurrection as yet.

Conclusion: If the Church was on earth during the Tribulation, then these saved individuals would be saved to a position in the Church...the Bride of Christ...leaving no prospective individuals...a "**believing remnant**" previously mentioned...with whom Christ could fulfill the covenants made with Israel.

19. The 144,000

As long as the Church is on earth, no one will be saved to any "**special**" Jewish relationship because whosoever is saved is saved to a position in the Body of Christ - (Colossians 1:26-29; 3:11; Ephesians 2:14-22; 3:1-7). However, Scripture tells us that, during the Tribulation period, God does seal a special group for salvation...the 144,000.

Conclusion: The fact that God, during the Tribulation period, again set Israel apart to national identity...and re-establishes His special relationship with them...indicates that the Church must no longer be on earth.

20. False "Peace and Safety"

In 1 Thessalonians 5:3, Paul tells us that...due to an announcement of "**peace and safety**"...there will be a false security that will "**lull many into a state of lethargy so that 'THAT DAY' comes as a thief.**"

Conclusion: If the Church were on earth during the Tribulation, there would be no possibility that such a message of "**peace and safety**" could be preached...or find acceptance...so that men would be lulled into complacency, because the Tribulation period would be a time when believers would be persecuted to an unprecedented degree.

21. Object of Satan's Attack

Revelation 12 tells us that the object of Satanic attack during the Tribulation period is "**the woman**" who produced the "**child**"...the "**Woman**" can only be Israel!

[See Darrel Mitchell's notes on the Book of Revelation]

Conclusion: The Church must not be here, or **she** would be the object of Satanic attack, rather than Israel!

22. Apostasy

The only organized church mentioned during the Tribulation period is the *Jezebel system* (Revelation 17 and 18), which is a picture of complete apostasy on the part of the professing church.

Conclusion: Because there is no mention, in Scripture, of the existence of a church apart from the apostate system, if, in fact, the true Church were on earth, it would, then, of necessity, have to be a part of that apostasy, and, because such a conclusion is impossible, it means that the

Church will **NOT** be here during that time of spiritual apostasy!

Final Conclusion:

No!

The Saints are **NOT** scheduled to go through the Tribulation!

Darrel Mitchell