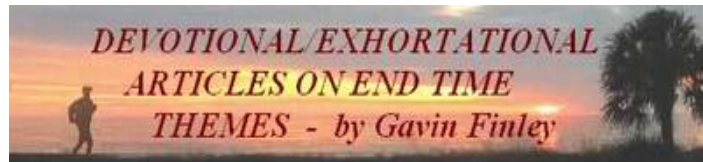


A RESPONSE TO GRANT JEFFREY REGARDING HIS CHALLENGE TO THE HISTORIC DOCTRINE OF THE POST-TRIBULATION RAPTURE. (PART 1)

A dear Australian friend of mine sent me this pre-trib challenge to the post tribulation rapture doctrine. It was



advanced by Grant Jeffrey, a well known pre-trib writer. He has asked me to reply. I'll go through Mr. Jeffrey's arguments one by one. He is a prolific writer on the endtime themes. Let me just say that while we may differ on the timing of the rapture Grant Jeffrey's informative books have been extremely helpful to me, especially regarding Israel. His investigative writings on the Hebrew feasts with speculation on their possible future meaning have been particularly interesting. It is truly unfortunate that he has not come to join us over on the post-trib side. Grant Jeffrey's dispensationalist presuppositions as well as his arguments and challenges to the post-tribulation rapture doctrine are quite typical of the current hyperdispensationalist evangelical mindset. Pre-tribulationist thinking concerning the endtime has been exceedingly popular. It has been around for over one hundred and fifty years now. It has now become the norm in America. In this article we shall carefully deal with the issues Grant Jeffrey raises and deal with them piece by piece.

Let me say this up front. Our pre-tribulationist brothers and sisters are pre-millennialists as we are. They take the scriptures in Revelation 20 at face value insofar as they hold to a literal future thousand year Millennium of Messiah. Like us, they too, believe that as Emmanuel, 'God with us', Jesus is coming back to the Mount of Olives in the same spiritual body we saw Him ascend into heaven. - Acts 1:11 He will rule over this earth for the duration of the coming [Millennium of Messiah](#). Christian believers in both the pre-trib camp and in the [post-trib camp](#) all watch for and await His appearing with great expectancy and joy. This is an enormously important point of common doctrine which cannot be overestimated.

We also agree on a future [70th week](#), the final 7 years of this present evil age. It will be a time for God's determined dealings with His covenant people. Our pre-trib friends choose to consider that in this instance, of some serious and painful dealings, those covenant people of God are not them. They are the Jews!

Post tribbers do not see two Second Comings and two Elects. They see God

calling out for Himself a covenant people from both the established Church, the Jewish nation, and from out of the nations. There will be a massive salvation and deliverance of the Jewish nation towards the very end of this age. (Zech.12:7-13:1) These new Jewish Christians will be poured into the Church bringing the great enrichment our Apostle Paul alluded to in Rom.11:12. Then we, as the predominantly gentile Body of Christ, who have been grafted into Israel as a wild olive branch, (Rom. ch.11), will realize our true roots in Israel. (Eph.2:12-13, Gal.3:29)

The destiny of the church and the destiny of Israel are not separate. They are one and the same. The return of our Lord Jesus Christ and the coming of the Jewish Messiah are also not separate. They are one and the same. Our destiny is in Him! The very day they are saved we read that Christian believers become partakers of the covenants of promise. By this means come into the Commonwealth, (or citizenship), of Israel. (Eph.2:11-13) If we are in Christ then He, as the Seed of Abraham, resides within us. In Christ we are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise". (Gal.3:29)

Post tribbers see the endtime drama as that crucible which is destined to bring the Church and Israel together and refine them into a confluent single remnant Elect. They are a royal priesthood and a holy nation. (Exod.19:6, 1Pet.2:9) Unfortunately pre-trib dogma has two Elects, and two chosen peoples. The constructors of this complicated internally stressed doctrine have also crafted an eschatology involving two second comings of Christ. They see a pre-tribulation rapture at the beginning of the seven years and another second coming at the end of the seven years. This sounds very nice when delivered from the pulpit or on television. The message goes down well. And it is very appealing to the crowds. But when the sincere Christian goes home and opens up his Bible to see just how it all fits together in scripture he is sorely disappointed. Try as he might the 'two comings' scenario just does not fit the Bible verses he reads. When he tries to force it to fit the scriptures the whole thing rapidly becomes very complicated, confusing, and internally stressed. (That makes him stressed too.) The seeking Christian begins to think it is all too difficult for him. As a layman he begins to think he will never be able to understand it. All too often he closes his Bible, sighs and concludes that only the 'experts' in Bible prophecy can tell him what is going to happen. This is truly unfortunate. The fact is this is far from the case.

When we go to **the scriptures alone**, discarding all that we have heard from church tradition and popular prophecy teaching and if we then submit ourselves to Christ alone and His Holy Word and search the scriptures in true careful Berean fashion in the Holy Spirit it is amazing how clear the whole picture soon becomes.

When we "see it" we realize it is quite different from what we have been told. Post-tribbers as they read their Bibles see one single return of Christ at the end of the age. This fits the scriptures nicely. It is all very neat, simple, and elegant.

The pre-tribulation rapture doctrine is not simple. It is complex, ponderous and messy. It leaves many loose ends dangling. In this scenario the Church goes up to heaven in a special early rapture. An earthbound Israel is "left behind" to somehow get saved quickly and finish the [Great Commission](#) (which the Church had previously abandoned). Jews and a mysterious company called the tribulation saints, (who are rarely spoken about), are left go through the harlot years, (of which virtually nothing is spoken), and then on into the Great Tribulation under the Antichrist. The debate between the two camps can become quite spirited, even contentious at times.

In spite of our differences the pre-trib and posttrib camps are very close when it comes to the foundational issues of the end-time. Both groups consider the scriptures as the final authority. At least we all **say** that the Bible is the final word. Sometimes Christian believers act strangely. They are inclined to balk at what certain scriptures plainly state. So we drift back into the popular churchy thinking. Pre-trib rapturism is a lot more agreeable to our flesh. We are in a socially satisfying church milieu where everyone speaks of nice things exclusively. So we are more comfortable when we do not question their doctrines.

We as post-tribbers spend far more time in discussion with our pre-trib brethren than with our Amillennialist friends in the older denominations. We also have had very little dialogue with our Postmillennialist friends in the "prophetic" movement rising up of late. The prophetic movement seems to be more receptive to charismatic leaders and to their dreams and books than to the scriptures. They are inclined to downgrade emphasis on the scriptures as "head knowledge". Nevertheless it seems apparent that there is also a genuine "spirit of Elijah" at work in the modern prophetic movement. The "prepare ye the way of the Lord" message is there and this is all very good. Unfortunately we are also seeing the emergence of a crusading ['Kingdom Now' movement](#) which is allying itself with Restorationism and Dominion theology. Amils and postmils are often not as committed to the principle of "Sol Scriptura"/ (scripture alone) in the formulation of their doctrine. Unfortunately they still follow the Augustinian allegorization of scripture and also allow church tradition to enter into their doctrines. This puts a churchy sort of a bind on the holy scriptures, especially where the matter of Israel is concerned. St. Augustine simply said in effect 'the Church is now Israel'. This is the essence of 'replacement theology' which has alienated the church from her true Hebrew roots. It has also spawned a Church ordained antisemitism which has gone on now for 1700 years.

Pre-trib and post-trib factions both see a future for Israel. We also agree on [a future 70th week](#). These are big points of agreement. Pre-tribbers currently outnumber post-tribbers by about 100 to one. This is a situation that will change as time goes on and as holy history unfolds. Many spirited discussions are going on right now on the internet regarding the timing of the rapture. This discussion gets so hot at times that this subject has been outlawed on some discussion boards. In spite of being as gracious as possible I have been censured many times on these discussion boards. Many times I have had my

posts "hidden" or deleted. On one occasion I was locked out of a discussion board for bringing up the mysterious issue of the timing of the resurrection of the righteous dead.

Nevertheless, we must move on. This subject of the timing of the rapture is very important. Correct information is essential for Christian morale as we move on up the pilgrim pathway. That being the case we must continue to tackle this subject scripturally, faithfully, and cheerfully.

Here we go with a my answers to Grant Jeffrey's arguments against a [Post-Tribulation Rapture](#).

GRANT JEFFREY >>>>

Several incorrect premises have caused some to reject the pretribulation Rapture and accept the position called the "Postribulation Rapture." The first premise is an emotional contention that it would be unfair for the modern Church to escape to heaven scot free to escape the martyrdom that other believers have experienced.

GAVIN >>>>

I agree this is an emotional response. But it may be more than that. When we read the Bible and study how our God deals with His covenant people and when we walk in the Holy Spirit and get to know Jesus personally then we come to know the character of God the Father. He is the God who always deals with people at the heart level. He is the one who judges and presides over holy history. When we know the real and genuine Holy One of Israel it is easier to identify counterfeit religious spirits and doctrines when they are paraded before us. They stick out like a sore thumb. Unsound unbiblical doctrines do not jive with what we know of the 'One who sits in the heavens'. - Ps.2 So when something doesn't sit right with us this may be more than just an 'emotional' issue. Yes, it may not be a rationally theologically deduced response. But the intuitive response of the heart is part of our being as God made us in His own image. God is not just a rational God with a Mind. He also has a heart. So do we. So our emotional responses are not a whole lot of nothing. They can be, yes. But often our emotional response is an evidence of the impact of God's Word within us. As Christians our emotional response may be the movement of His Spirit within us. Our emotions can sometimes be fickle and meaningless. But then they can also be very spiritual as we saw with the wife of Pontius Pilate for example. Our heart response is just as important as the cold reasoned response of our mind to 'the facts'. **Both** are important. Jesus said that the day will come when His people "will worship God in **Spirit** as well as in Truth". (John 4:23)

So, that being said, let us ask God to help guide our **hearts** with the Presence of His Holy Spirit. And let us see if we can test and **discern the spirits** here.

Here is the gist of Pre-Tribulation Rapturism. We are being asked to believe that God would remove the early responding western church from the glorious

endtime drama seven years earlier than everybody else. And what is the reason for this early departure at a time when the church's witness will be required more than at any other time in history? Well it seems the central matter is the comfort of the flesh of the present crop of western Christians.

Hmmmm.

If we know what true saints have experienced in times past (Heb.11) and what Indonesian Christians are experiencing today and this notion just doesn't sit well with us in our hearts then what can we say? Is our discomfiture just be an emotional thing? Well, yes it might be. But in the case of a devoted saint who knows their God it could also mean that deep down he or she senses that something is seriously amiss.

Most of our soul life is sub-conscious. It is like an iceberg. Most of it is beneath the water and not seen. We do not have full rational access to our heart, our psyche or soul. We don't really know all that goes on in our heart. What is inside the human heart can only be revealed by testing. Yes, even trials and tribulations. This is the "good grief" that has always haunted Charlie Brown. We simply must come to our time of testing. This applies to the overindulged untested narcissistic western church as much as it does to the persecuted church in China. Until testing comes we just don't know what lies in our hearts.

The Bible says that

"the heart of man is deceitful above all things
and desperately wicked; Who can know it?"

Let us now assess our emotional, (or spiritual), response to the following. Hebrews 11 lays out the hall of fame of the famous saints who have gone before us. Many of them suffered for their faith and witness as did the early Christians in the first three centuries. They went through their hour of trial faithfully and victoriously. Now let us fast forward to the present time. 500 of our fellow Christians die for their faith in Christ every day. These dear saints are true overcomers, we cannot deny this. And yet here in the pampered self-esteemed rich western nations we have crafted a doctrine for ourselves that has us abandoning our Jewish brothers and sisters, deserting our posts and going AWOL from the Great Commission to escape scot free from any future trials and tribulations. In this pre-tribulation rapture scheme we shall never be called upon to bring our witness before kings and rulers. How does that sound?

Here is another. **The final leg of the relay race** is just about to begin. The Christians who know about this are preparing themselves for the great race. We are excited in God for the chance to do something meaningful for Him. And now we are being told that we won't be running?
Dear reader, how do you feel about this?
Does this sound right to you?

GRANT JEFFREY >>>>

An underlying attitude of many critics is their incorrect and unscriptural belief that the Church will somehow be purified by enduring the wrath of the Antichrist.

GAVIN >>>>

This concept of refinement of men and nations as they go through the challenges of life is quite scriptural and is historically true as well. Great men and nations have always had their character honed and forged in the crucible of affliction. This was true for ancient Israel where God allowed their enemies in the surrounding nations to come against His covenant people when they had turned to idolatry worshipping other gods. It was in His mercy to do so or the nation would have been dissolved. Judgment must come just as an abscess must be drained in order to save the life of a patient on the verge of developing fatal septicemia. In a national crisis King Jehosaphat led the people of Judah to repent and cry out to God in their hour of trial. This led to a great and glorious victory. Wicked kings like Ahab and Manasseh never considered that they needed to submit themselves to judgment from God. In our Australian experience it was the crucible of World War 1 that brought forth the ANZACS. Their fortitude and cheer in the face of affliction became legendary and the material for a huge amount of testimony in writing. Great Britain too had their 'finest hour' during the Nazi bombing blitz against London in 1940. America's nationhood was forged at "Valley Forge" when Washington's army was at the point of total collapse. In these times of testing the true character of great men and nations is revealed. Our Apostle Paul tells us that

"...judgement must begin at the house of God". - 1Pet.4:17

Why should we expect that God will change this policy of His, (which is eternal), for the sake of the fleshly comforts of the narcissistic, overindulged, lukewarm [Laodicean](#) western church?

GRANT JEFFREY >>>>

However, the Scriptures declare that we are purified solely by the completed work of Christ on the Cross.

GAVIN >>>>

I believe this is an overbearing theological argument as well as being an oversimplification. Our coming to Christ is more than our initial salvation. It is more than just the purchase of a 'ticket to heaven'. A marriage is more than just the initial wedding. The bride too has her part to play in the proceedings. Her witness is essential. Any Christian teacher who informs the people of God that "Jesus did it all" and that therefore they have zero responsibility in the covenant does not understand what true Christianity is. They do not understand [Blood Covenant Christianity](#). When a person comes to Christ he or she is suddenly 'in Christ'. And salvation leads on into sanctification as we progressively surrender more and more of our self life to the gentle rule of the indwelling Christ. Like marriage, we are in a blood covenant relationship with the Holy Spirit leading us on into the heart of the Shepherd of Israel. Blood covenant is a two way street between two parties. It is not all happening "out

there" in some theological courtroom. Nor is it all happening up at the front of the church or across some religious gnostic chasm. We do not sit under our tree and philosophize objectively with the scriptures as 'facts'. The Bible is God's love letter to us! We do not come into covenant with Jesus Christ merely as a matter of intellectual or theological assent to His blood atonement up in the heavenlies. We **respond** to Christ. We invite Him inside our whole being. Our salvation is merely the beginning of the story. By our progressive surrender to the indwelling Christ He is changing us from the inside out. This is a process called sanctification or purification.

We talk of salvation and its legalities. But sanctification is something rarely spoken of in today's popular churches. But it is the ongoing process of **purification**. Our sanctification and purification does not bring us salvation. Rather, it is our salvation that brings us into covenant relationship with Christ. It is in that relationship that we are purified. Our good works are merely evidence of the life of Christ within. We find ourselves in love with God. As a consequence of that love springs up within us. So we purify ourselves. Not because we **have** to purify ourselves, but because we want to. We love Him. We want to be like Him. This is the devotion, and the power of the Holy Spirit within us empowers us to walk in godliness.

2. 'Beloved, now are we the sons of God,
And it does not yet appear what we shall be,
But we know that when Christ shall appear,
We shall be like Him;
For we shall see Him as he is.(KJV)

3. And **everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself,**
just as He is pure. 1John 3:2-3 (NKJV)

So this inner work of purification is not "salvation by works". Our sanctification merely reflects the work of Christ within us. It is evidence of His divine grace. God brings His divine service down from heaven onto the altar our heart. The atonement is not an event that only happens up in heaven. Such an idea is religious gnosticism. Christ brings His atonement, His reconciliation between God and man down to earth. He brings His reconciliation and His peace right into the lives and hearts of His beloved covenant people. The purifying fire of God comes down to us from the heavenly places. He brings it home to us by His Holy Spirit. Christ has descended on Jacob's ladder. -John 1:51 He is God incarnate, Immanuel, 'God with us'. The blood of the atonement is not just some theological legality, "out there". Jesus brings His purifying Presence to us personally! We are in the loop! And when we are tested in those encounters with those adversaries of Christ in this world it is the fire of His Presence within us at work. He is the One at work **in us**. And it is He who brings forth the gold refined in the fire.

This was the case for our Apostle Paul. He was knocked off his high horse. He was blinded by God. Was God a meany here? Not at all. This crisis actually opened Saul's spiritual eyes and led to his salvation. His physical blindness was healed as well. This was 'good grief'. This affliction upon our Apostle

Paul also opened the pathway for the salvation of the gentile nations beyond Israel. God actually wrestles with His people even as He purifies them. Why? Because He loves them! To deny this is to espouse a Disneyized Gospel of the flesh.

GRANT JEFFREY >>>>

If the Lord delays His return much longer, the rising tide of persecution of Christians will affect the Church across the world. However, this will not constitute the Tribulation period which will be characterized by the wrath of God poured out from heaven on the unrepentant sinners during the final seven years of this age.

GAVIN >>>>

There is no scripture identifying the final seven years or the 70th week or even the final three and a half years of the "Great Tribulation" (- Mat.24:21) as the "wrath of God". To slip the "wrath of God" in under the guise of "great tribulation" is a crafty piece of work. Is this just sloppy scholarship? These teachers are highly intelligent. There is surely a hidden socio-political agenda here. The "wrath of God" and the "Great Tribulation" are clearly quite different. Did the persecuted saints of old in their tribulations and afflictions suffer as a result of the "wrath of God"? Did Corrie Ten Boom and her sister in their tribulations/afflictions in that Nazi concentration camp suffer the "wrath of God"? How about the 500 saints who are dying every day for Christ right now. Are they suffering under the "wrath of God"? Such an assertion is outrageous. Pre-trib teachers will have to give account of this "wrath of God = tribulation/affliction" teaching before the BEMA judgement seat one day. Indeed we shall all have our works and teachings tested. God knows the true motives of the hearts. As Bible teachers we are held to a higher standard. If we have misrepresented the Holy Scriptures it will be bad for us when the King returns.

We must get this right. A word study through the scriptures shows clearly that the "wrath of God" will come at the end of this age. John in the Book of Revelation saw it come after the tribulation when the sun turns to darkness, the moon to blood, and the stars fall. These are the cosmic signs of the sixth seal when the sign of the coming son of man is seen in the heavens. - Rev.6:12-17 At that time the heavens open up and the kings and rulers hide themselves in caves and in the rocks of the mountains. They say to the mountains and rocks,

16. "...Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb!

17. For **the great day of His wrath has come,**
And who is able to stand?" - Rev.6:16-17

The returning Christ will send His angels of wrath and His judgement will be poured out on His enemies. Then he will deliver His saints, both the living and the resurrected dead to glory. Jesus said he would raise His people up at the "last day". Messiah is coming to establish His earthly Millennial

Kingdom. It is the 'Day of Christ' (2Thes.2:3) or the 'Day of the Lord', or 'that Day' etc. The wrath of God will be visited on the wicked, (and on the wicked only), by evil angels of wrath. (Ps. 78:49) These angels of unspeakable horror will gather the tares, (the wicked), at 'the end of the age'. -Mat.13:24-43

This is what the Bible says about the wrath of God. To lump the tribulation period of the harlot and Antichrist in with these awesome post-tribulation judgements of God is both unscriptural and illogical. To label the whole 3.5 years of the Great Tribulation or the entire 7 years of persecution of God's people as the 'wrath of God' is a gross misrepresentation of holy scripture. The wrath of the Antichrist is quite clearly **not** the wrath of God.

GRANT JEFFREY >>>>

Some critics have claimed that those who teach the hope of the pretribulation rapture are leaving Christians unprepared for the possibility of the coming persecution of the Tribulation period.

GAVIN >>>>

Yes. This is the greatest burden of the post trib camp. The Chinese experience in 1949 clearly demonstrated that a Church that is superficial in their commitment and unprepared to suffer for the faith will crumble when it is put to the test. Faithful Christians who have suffered for the faith and gained the victory are also concerned that the western church is not being given a heads up on what is coming and will not be prepared. Some have expressed real concerns about the pre-tribulation rapture doctrine sending the wrong message to the church. [Corrie Ten Boom warned about this very thing](#). When Mao Tse Tung and his Red Guards put the Chinese church through the indoctrination mill those saints who were not prepared to suffer for their faith departed from Christ in a great "falling away" or apostasy. Pre-trib doctrine, as given to the Chinese church by the American missionaries was tested there in China in the fiery crucible of history. And it was found wanting.

Go to China today and visit the vibrant, youthful and expanding house Churches. These dear saints are currently under heavy persecution and yet they continue in the faith. They have doubled their numbers every seven years since 1949. There are probably more faithful, field tested saints in China than we have back here in the west. When we look around for the pre-tribulation rapture doctrine in China today it cannot be found. It is as extinct over there as the dodo bird.

GRANT JEFFREY >>>>

However, in thirty-five years of teaching Bible prophecy, I have not witnessed pretribulation Rapture teachers instructing Christians that they are immune from endtime persecution. The prophecy teachers, myself included, who believe God promises that Christians will escape "wrath of God" in the Tribulation often warn believers that persecution is coming, even in North America, if the Lord tarries much longer.

GAVIN >>>>

I believe this hedging on the part of pre-trib teachers is the ragged edge of this doctrine. Pre-trib doctrine is a shaky house of cards built on sand. It will surely crumble, and hopefully before the 70th week opens. The saints need time to get their house in order. The 70th week could open any year now. How many unprepared saints will get angry at the church and angry at God when that happens? [The trumpets will be blowing](#). How many will shake their fist at God and say "why wasn't I told!!?" How many will join the 'last crusade' and go on to political and military disaster? – Dan.7:21&25, Dan.8:24 and Dan.12:7. How many will respond in fear rather than in faith and bolt for the hills? How many Christians will give up on their Christian witness? How many spiritually unprepared believers will choose to shut themselves up in a cave in Idaho stashed with soybeans, assault weapon ammo and the sweat of fear? How many will "fall away" from the faith in [the great apostasy](#) our Apostle Paul warned us about? -2Thes.2:3 This is the main burden and concern of many post-tribbers as they view with some concern the current demoralized state of the western [Church of Laodicea](#).

GRANT JEFFREY >>>>

However, the posttribulation Rapture position can rob the Church of her blessed hope.

GAVIN >>>>

For Bible teachers to interpret the 'blessed hope' as a guarantee for the preservation of our flesh life is most unfortunate. Not only is it unscriptural but it is a watering down of our faith. Our relationship with Christ our coming Bridegroom is the pattern for our marriages. Our wedding vows state the nature and depth of the covenant we are entering into. It is "unto death do us part". The Christian faith is no different to the marriage covenant. Our Apostle Paul says that we are espoused to Jesus Christ. - 2Cor.11:2 Our Christian faith, like the wedding commitment the bride enters into when she signs the register is [a blood covenant relationship](#). It is a total and unconditional commitment unto death. To deny this is a misrepresentation of Holy Scripture. It calls the western church to a lesser covenant, a lesser Jesus. It is just a merchant's deal with Jesus that carries a cancellation clause. The popular easy believism of the western church today can, (and will), be cancelled by many a Christian whenever his or her flesh life is threatened. This watered down message is a sop to put the church into a slumber. It is bad for morale. It is not a faithful witness of the caliber we saw demonstrated by the saints who have gone before us. Nor is it seen in the faithful witness of persecuted Christians overseas today. Christians in early church history faced death with singing. The Church in the west has been coddled to the point where Christianity has lost its zest and zing. And this is why our teenagers no longer respect us or our Christian faith. We no longer commit ourselves to the Way of the cross.

Open our Bibles and what do we see? The story of God's people is an awesome and ongoing drama. It is not syrupy Hollywood melodrama. The flesh appeasing pre-tribulation rapture doctrine is the wrong message to send the Church. At some point we shall face the endtime drama. [Are we ready?](#)

Let us look at what the Holy Scriptures tells us concerning the 'blessed hope'.
Let us not add anything to what is being said by the Holy Spirit.

Titus 2

2:11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,

2:12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age,

2:13 looking for the **blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.** -Titus 2:11-13

There is nothing in the verses above giving a 100% assurance of physical protection of saints in witness. Our **blessed hope**, according to the scripture above, is in **the glorious appearing of Christ**. At His coming He will change us into His likeness which is a glorified, spiritual, and incorruptible body. That reality will transcend our flesh life. In Christ we shall be carried in a glorious transport across the threshold of our flesh life and into a glory that is beyond all the sorrow and pain we experience currently in this mortal flesh. The second coming of Christ will bring our glorification. We shall be changed into His likeness. At his coming the corruptible body we now live in will be exchanged for a new spiritual body.

This is the blessed hope.

1 Corinthians 15

15:50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption.

15:51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed--

15:52 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.

15:53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

15:54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory.

GRANT JEFFREY >>>>

Jesus promised, "I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (Revelation 3:10).

GAVIN >>>>

This is a common verse pre-tribbers use to try to discredit the post-tribulation rapture. In the verse above the word "keep" means "preserve". And the word translated as "from" is the Greek word "ek" or Strong's word 1537. "Ek" can mean "from" and also "through" and "out of". So Rev. 3:10 in context can be read more completely as

"I will preserve you FROM, IN, THROUGH and OUT OF the hour of trial..." - Rev.3:10

GRANT JEFFREY >>>>

The second and more important reason why some are teaching that the Church will be present during this terrible time is the failure to distinguish between God's plan for Israel and His plan for the Church, especially in the prophecy revealed by Christ in Matthew 24. They often acknowledge that there is strong biblical evidence for a pretribulation Rapture; however, they inevitably come back to their interpretation of Matthew 24, which seems to indicate that the Rapture follows the events of the Great Tribulation.

GAVIN >>>>

This is true. Post tribbers see one second coming. Not two. Post tribbers also do not distinguish between the destiny of the church and the destiny of Israel. They hear Jesus talking to them personally in Mathew 24. They do not write it off as merely a message to the Jewish nation. Furthermore, they see the two branches of God's Judeo-Christian people as becoming confluent in Christ in the crucible of the endtime drama as one single elect remnant company of God. Here is [an excellent article on this final regathering and unity of all of God's people into one single remnant elect in Christ](#) by Shayne Froelich.

Many post tribbers are committed to staying alongside their Jewish brothers and sisters until the Jewish nation is saved or until the bitter end. They will not buy a ticket for a separate special edition early [rapture train to Zion](#) seven years earlier than God has scheduled in His Word. They believe God will be with them as He promised, even through the trials of the 70th week. They see an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the end-time as Joel has stated. - Joel 2:28-32 A wonderful moment of Jewish national salvation is also due to come as well. This will come late in the 70th week at the siege of Armageddon in the 6th seal days of a bloody moon. -Zech 12:7-13:1, Joel 2:28-32 There will be no special early escape before the fullness of the gentiles is brought in with the great endtime harvest. Many are also now beginning to see that there will be a climax of the Holy Spirit outpouring at the 6th seal cosmic signs. So we know that in spite of the dangers ahead [a great and glorious end-time revival](#) is coming. Like the climax of the fireworks festival many do not want to miss it. They see this inclination to leave the final big show of the ages as essentially an abandonment of the covenant. Some go so far as to say that this is evidence that the current western Laodicean church is secretly planning to 'go AWOL' and desert the ship in the face of the dangers up ahead. God has already spoken to this shameful business of desertion in [the story of the Apostle Paul's shipwreck in Acts 27](#).

GRANT JEFFREY >>>>

In the passage in Matthew 24, Christ is on the Temple Mount explaining to His Jewish disciples the events that will occur in Israel and in other disciples' question that Jesus was answering concerned the coming of Israel's long promised Kingdom, not the coming of Christ for His Church (which they did

not even know about). It is easy to forget that, at this point, before the crucifixion of our Lord and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, there was no such thing as a Christian Church. If you had told one of the disciples during the week before Christ's crucifixion that someday there would be an organization based on Christ's teachings, called the Church, and that 99 percent of its members would be uncircumcised Gentiles who would follow neither Jewish law nor offer Temple sacrifices, he would probably have fallen off his chair in shock and disbelief. One of the classic mistakes in interpretation is to take this conversation between Christ and His Jewish disciples concerning the messianic kingdom and read back into it the reality of the Christian Church which did not come into existence until the Jews rejected Christ and God breathed life into His Body of believers.

GAVIN >>>>

It is true that post-tribbers embrace the [Olivet Discourse](#) as end-time information intended for the Church as well as for Israel. We see them both coming into confluence in the crucible of the Apocalypse. The disciples as Jews also knew that the covenants of Israel would eventually be a blessing to the whole world. They also had an unfolding understanding about their coming Servant providing and being a 'Light to the Gentiles'. - Isa.46:6, 49:6, & 60:3. The church and national Israel are both called "the elect" in scripture. The final remnant will come out of both to have a common destiny in Christ. Nowhere in scripture do we see two elects of God. A word study of the word "elect" will show that the Holy Spirit, (who wrote the scriptures), considers both the church and Israel as being "called out" as one elect chosen people. The word "ekklesia" from which we get our word "church" means "called out". Nothing more. The only question we need to answer then is to Whom are we being called out? Is it the Holy One of Israel? And if so then where is our ultimate citizenship? Might it be in the Commonwealth of Israel? - Eph.2:12-13

The indwelling Christ is at work here. He is forming inside us the 'new man'. we are no longer heathen gentiles outside of the covenant. The indwelling Christ is the Seed of Abraham. If we are in Christ we are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. - Gal.3:29 The church is inextricably linked to Israel. But being in partial blindness we cannot see that yet. - Rom.11:25 To deny this leads to a continuation of the same old medieval "us and them" mentality between the Church and the Jews. Church history has repeatedly shown this false presumption of separate destinies leads to [antisemitism](#) inside the church. This doctrinal alienation opens the door to the eruption of political alienation. Antisemitism rises up inside European nations whenever they come to the peak of their power. We have seen this with the Spanish Inquisitions, the French reign of terror, the German holocaust, and the British who betrayed the Jews and went back on the Balfour declaration after WW2. A British cruiser fired on an unarmed tramp steamer full of Jews hoping to go to Israel after the war. Church history in the Crusades, the Inquisitions, and more recently the Holocaust reveal continuing shameful acts of bloodshed inside European Christendom against our yet unsaved Jewish brethren. Will it

happen in America as they come to the peak of their power? God forbid!

The Bible teaches that the Jewish nation will eventually repent and be saved. National Israel will be joining us in the final days of the Great Tribulation just as Zechariah has prophesied. –Zech. 12:7-13:1 Jerusalem shall be delivered at the climax of the endtime Holy Spirit outpouring when Joel tells us that "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved". Joel 2:28-32

To say that the church is the "spiritual people of God" whilst Israel is bound forever to remain the earthbound "earthly people of God" is an awful slander. The Jewish nation will repent, be saved, and born again. This much we know. –Zech 12 and Rom 11. The question we need to ask ourselves is this. Are we prepared to wait for them? Clearly those who formed the pre-trib doctrine are not. This is very worrisome. The Jewish tribe of Judah is the royal tribe. Jesus Himself is returning as the Lion of the tribe of Judah. The Millennial Throne of David is in Judah. God will not "make up His jewels" (-Mal 3:16) until all 12 jewels are restored, including Judah. Judah is numbered in the Revelation 7 accounting of the 12 tribes. The New Jerusalem is a Holy City with 12 gates.- Rev.21 The central Jewish tribe of Judah is one of those gates, the royal gate, testifying of the righteous rule of God. This poor earth will have a new rulership under the coming Messiah. He will rule under the dual offices bound up in [the Order of Melchizedek](#). And when the New Jerusalem, the Holy City of God, the perfect complete Bride of Christ, descends from heaven not one gate, let alone Judah's gate, will be missing. God does not leave His people behind. Not even the Jews. They are the royal tribe! That is not YHVH's style. It is not His character. It never has been. And never will be. This is a blood covenant issue. We had best agree with The Holy One of Israel on this.

On to Part 2



A RESPONSE TO GRANT JEFFREY REGARDING HIS CHALLENGE TO THE HISTORIC DOCTRINE OF THE POST-TRIBULATION RAPTURE. (PART 2)

GRANT JEFFREY >>>>

Since Christ does not mention the Church to His disciples in this conversation, the plain interpretation is that Israel is the primary focus of the Prophecy of Matthew 24. Matthew 24 speaks of the Great Tribulation, and beginning at verse 15, Christ states that the Antichrist will set up the "abomination of desolation" (a supernatural statue of the Antichrist) to be worshiped in the Temple.

GAVIN >>>>

I have yet to see a Christian tear Matthew 24 out of their Bible saying "This bad news is written for the Jews only". If they were truly sincere about this notion of Mat 24 being just for the Jews they would proceed to mail the torn out leaf to the nearest synagogue. The doctrine that delineates a continuing separation of two people of God forever amounts to a dangerous "apartheid of the elect". Again, this is totally unfounded in scripture. The words of Jesus in the Olivet Discourse in Mat.24 were spoken to His trusted disciples. They are for our ears in the church. If we will hear them.

GRANT JEFFREY >>>>

In verses 40 and 41, Jesus says, "Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left." A vital question for students of the Bible is the identity of these people who "shall be taken." Does this prophecy refer to the Church or does it reveal God's plans for the Tribulation saint who become believers after the Rapture?

GAVIN >>>>

The ones taken are neither the tribulation saints nor the church. In this instance I agree with Professor Walvoord of Dallas Theological Seminary. He is the acclaimed dean of pre-tribulation rapturism. He (and most post-tribblers), believe that the ones taken are the wicked. They are carried off to a place of dead carcasses and vultures. Luke 17 17:34 I tell you, in that night there will be two people in one bed. The one will be taken, and the other will be left. 17:35 There will be two women grinding together. The one will be taken, and the other will be left." 17:36 17:37 They answering, asked him, "Where, Lord?" He said to them, "Where the body is, there will the vultures also be gathered together." -Luke 17:34-37

This is an awful place of death. There is surely no glory to be found there. And no glorified saints either. The ones left are the righteous. This corresponds with Jesus teaching on the wheat and tares. -Mat.13:24-43 The wicked, the tares, are gathered first.-Mat.13:30

GRANT JEFFREY >>>>

This chapter tells us that at the end of the Great Tribulation, God will send His angels and "they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (verse 31). These "elect" are the people who become believers during the Great Tribulation of three and one half years. This gathering together is not the Rapture. This gathering of Tribulation believers takes place at the end of the Tribulation, whereas the Rapture of the Church occurs sometime prior to the beginning of the Great Tribulation when Antichrist sets himself up as "God" in the Temple.

GAVIN >>>>

This separation of the tribulation saints from the church and this denial of the tribulation saints as being worthy of belonging to the church is a grievous betrayal. We have no basis in scripture to cut these dear believers off from us in the church just because the pre-tribulation rapture chart makers have seen fit to terminate the Age of Grace and the Church Age before the 70th week begins. These precious tribulation saints have "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb".-Rev.7:14 Do we dare presume to excommunicate them from us? Furthermore they go to a high heavenly destiny. John sees them go on to minister before the throne of God in His heavenly temple.-Rev.7:15 If they came up for church membership in our churches today would we approve their membership? We must be careful how we answer this. Their angels are watching.

GRANT JEFFREY >>>>

Notice that the angels "gather the elect" (verse 31), whereas, at the time of the Rapture, "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Thessalonians 4:16__17). This gathering of the "elect" Tribulation saints will occur at the conclusion of three and one half years, a period of time for which there are the most detailed prophecies found in the Bible.

GAVIN >>>

Christ returns with His angels to judge the wicked and deliver His elect. The 1Thes. 4:15-17 account even mentions the "voice of the archangel". We do not have proof from the mere omission of mention of angels in a given account of the rapture that they are not involved.

GRANT JEFFREY >>>

The Bible describes many Tribulation events that must occur prior to the "gathering" of the Tribulation saints and thus, it cannot be correctly described as "imminent."

GAVIN >>>>

Imminency is not an issue regarding the timing of the resurrection-rapture. All the Bible says is that “no man knows the day or the hour” of Christ’s return. - Mat.24:36 This does not prove that the rapture could have been imminent throughout the past 2,000 years. This 'no man knows the day or the hour' just means that no man or angel has the very fine detail of timing down to 24 hours. But Jesus rebukes those who do not read the seasons and signs of the times. -Mat.16:1-3

GRANT JEFFREY >>>>

These facts have caused many scholars to believe that this "gathering" is, therefore, a different event than the "Rapture" of the Church. However, when we turn our attention to the coming of Christ for His Church, we find that there are no warnings or signals given to indicate the time of the Rapture. The Rapture can literally occur at any time.

GAVIN >>>>

The rapture cannot occur 'at any time'. It must follow the harvest resurrection of the righteous dead at the 'last day'. A word study of 'last day' will soon set the record straight. In John 6 Jesus tells us that He will return to raise His people up at the "last day". He repeats the message **four times** in the same chapter. (John 6:39,40,44,& 54) Even Martha testified to Jesus her belief in the resurrection of the righteous dead. Unlike most evangelicals today she got the timing down without any problem. She said, Lord, I know he (Lazarus) will rise again, in the resurrection at the '**last day**'.

Now let us go on from there. Our dear Apostle Paul said that the rapture of the living **cannot precede** this harvest resurrection of the righteous dead.

1 Thessalonians 4

4:14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

4:15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.

4:16 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.

4:17 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.

The timing of this first resurrection harvest is further given to us in Rev.20

20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his

mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

20:5 But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

20:6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. - Rev.20:4-6

As we can see, the first resurrection harvest includes tribulation saints who will have died refusing the 666 mark of the beast. So the resurrection-rapture must be late. In fact it must be post-trib. This is decisive and irrefutable proof of the correctness of the post-tribulation rapture.

GRANT JEFFREY>>>

The third reason posttribulationist writers have attacked the pretribulation Rapture doctrine by claiming that it cannot be true because no Church writer or Reformer ever taught this doctrine until approximately 170 years ago until it was introduced by John Darby, a Plymouth Brethren. Their argument that no one ever saw this "truth" throughout eighteen hundred years of Church history has been very effective, causing many Christians to abandon their belief in the pretribulation Rapture. The only problem is that their assertion that no one in the early Church taught the pretribulation Rapture has been found to be incorrect. Obviously the truth about the time of the Rapture can be found only in Scripture. The Protestant Reformation was based essentially on this return to the authority of the Bible. The Latin phrase sola Scriptura, meaning "Scripture alone" became the rallying cry of the Reformers who ignored centuries of tradition and church councils in their insistence that truth could only be discovered in the Word of God. While the resolution of this issue must be based on our interpretation of Scripture, it is important to answer the errors of our opponents, who disparage "the blessed hope" of the Rapture with misinformation about the modern rediscovery of the truth about the pretribulation Rapture.

A Discovery that the Pretribulation Rapture Was Taught in the Early Church During the summer of 1994, after more than a decade of searching, I discovered several fascinating manuscripts that contain clear evidence of the teaching of the pre_tribulation rapture in the early church. Ephraem's Teaching on the Pretribulation Rapture For all the saints and Elect of God are gathered, prior to the tribulation that is to come, and are taken to the Lord lest they see the confusion that is to overwhelm the world because of our sins. (On the Last Times, the Antichrist, and the End of the World, by Ephraem the Syrian, A.D. 373) The early Christian writer and poet, Ephraem the Syrian, (A.D. 306 _ 373) was a major theologian of the early Byzantine Eastern Church. He was born near Nisbis, in the Roman province of Syria, near present_day Edessa, Turkey. Ephraem's fascinating teaching on the Antichrist has never been published in English until I wrote FINAL WARNING in 1995.

Some scholars suggested that this manuscript was written several centuries later (5th or 6th century) but definitely before the birth of Islam in 622. However William Bousset, one of the greatest scholars on ancient eschatology, concluded in his book *The Antichrist Legend* that it was written by Ephraem the Syrian before A.D. 373.¹ Andrew R. Anderson wrote in his book *Alexander's Gate* that he accepted the early date as being valid.²

This critically important prophecy manuscript from the fourth century of the Church era reveals a very clear statement about the pretribulation return of Christ to take His elect saints home to heaven to escape the coming Tribulation. For additional details read the article *Examining an ancient Pre-tribulation Rapture statement* on my web site.

GAVIN >>>>

I would defer this argument to my good friend Tim Warner. He has an extensive section devoted to this very matter on his excellent scripturally faithful post-trib website, [The Last Trumpet](#). He addresses Mr. Jeffrey's assertion of a pre-trib belief taught in the early church in the link below entitled,

['The early church fathers on the endtime'](#).

Back to [Part 1](#)

