

## **Rapture Facts From The Book Of Revelation—3** **“When Does The Great Tribulation Begin?”**

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### **A Recap From Part One:**

Remember what John said about *"those who dwell upon the earth"* during the Great Tribulation?

- They will slay one another with a great sword (6:3, 4).
- They are the ones who murder those saved during the Tribulation (6:10).
- The wrath of God within the judgments called "three woes" specifically fall upon them (8:13).
- They murder the two special prophets of God (Moses and Elijah?) and rejoice over their deaths (11:10).
- The message given by these two prophets will torment them (11:10).
- They will worship the Antichrist, and their names are not in the Lamb's book of life (13:8, 12).
- They will be deceived by the miracles of the False Prophet (13:14).
- They will be intoxicated and blinded by the false one-world religious system (17:2).
- They will worship the beast and they will accept his mark (20:4).

God is going to have an hour of testing for this group to demonstrate the hard, evil hearts of *"those who dwell upon the earth"* that God's judgment of them will be shown as totally just; and because it is totally just, a number impossible for mankind to count will make decisions for Christ (These are the tribulation saints)!

Let us consider who *"those who dwell in heaven"* are. *First*, they cannot be angels because of a statement made in Revelation 12:12 about this same group of "heaven dwellers." It says, *"For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that his time is short."* God's angels would not be exhorted to rejoice, as they are not dwelling on earth during the devil's unrestrained wrath. Satan couldn't hurt them.

*Second*, this is not a reference to the massacred tribulation saints. Though a non-resurrected believer's soul does go to be consciously with the Lord after he dies, he is never said "to dwell in heaven" until after he receives a resurrection body. Resurrection of the tribulation saints takes place at the end of the 7 years tribulation (Rev. 20:4).

*Third*, there is a direct contrast made between *"those who dwell on earth,"* who are the unbelievers, and *"those who dwell in heaven."* The "heaven dwellers" are the believers, and we have already seen in Revelation 4:1-4 that the Elders are the Church raptured, having already been issued their rewards, and cast their crowns before His throne.

### **Recap From Part Two:**

Revelation four and five deal with the rapture, The Judgment Seat of Christ (issue of rewards), The 7-sealed book which no one was qualified to open except the Christ, God's Son. There was worship and praise like we have never heard; the "New Song" sung by the four beasts and the 24 elders (5:8-10). Then the multitude of angels, the beasts and elders, the numbers being ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands—all saying with a loud voice (12-14), **12)** *"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to*

*receive power and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. 13) And every creature which is in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne forever and ever. 14) And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped Him that liveth forever and ever.”*

There are no English words to accurately describe these scenes! Awesome does not begin to describe them. The glorious singing and sharing among the multitudes of angels, beasts and elders, all praising and singing in all the power and glory of heaven!

Saints, I'm talking about an extreme homecoming! Imagine millions of angels, the four beasts, and the Church of Jesus Christ (elders)—all together in one huge assembly, crying out in the freedom of the Holy Spirit no man has ever—before, in all creation, witnessed!

The feeling of pending doom rests on the earth. Anger and frustration overcomes men. The antichrist waits in the shadows to perform that which was assigned to him by his father, satan, in chapter six. The beginning of the Great Tribulation Period.

Church Age saints, remember this. *The Tribulation cannot begin until the Church has been taken out of the way.* (2 Thes. 2:7) Men who *believe doctrines* they aren't sure of usually know little, or nothing about the prophetic books and the Revelation. They simply believe their humility depends on their rejection of the “escape” promised the righteous Church by Jesus Christ Himself.

3) Let no man deceive you by any means: *for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition* 4) Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. 5) Remember ye not, that when I was yet with you, I told you these things? 6) And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. 7) *For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth [will let], until he be taken out of the way.* 8) And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: 9) [Even him], whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and **signs and lying wonders,**” (2 Thes. 2: 3-9). (my emphasis’).

I cannot give you the exact time and day, but He will come for His church very soon. Read and study the portion of scripture in 2 Thessalonians 2 (above), so you might realize that 2 Thessalonians 2: 3-9 is in perfect unity with Revelation chapters 4-6; that the church will leave earth in the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter of Revelation, and the antichrist will be revealed in the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter of Revelation.

That's a promise from the Father through the Son and the Holy Spirit to Apostle Paul—who was commanded to reveal this information to His Church! As verse 7 above states, the antichrist cannot be revealed till the Church be *taken out of the way*. The Holy Spirit cannot be fully *taken out of the way* because He must be around to draw the tribulation saints to Christ *during* the Tribulation. The remainder of the people on earth are *those who dwell on the earth*, and have become the enemy of righteousness.

*Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.* (Luke 21:36).

*Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of [this] calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of [his] goodness, and the work of faith with power:* (2 Thessalonians 1:11).

