

THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

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Mission Statement

This study of the Book of Revelation gives special attention to the testimony it provides concerning our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. “The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (Rev 19:10; cp. 1:2), leading us to worship and serve Him in everything.

- I. What you have seen (Rev 1).
 - II. What is now (Rev 2–3)—the seven churches of Asia Minor.
 - Ephesus (2:1–7)
 - Smyrna (2:8–11)
 - Pergamum (2:12–17)
 - Thyatira (2:18–29)
 - Sardis (3:1–6)
 - Philadelphia (3:7–13)
6. Commitment of Christ
- *He will preserve them from the time of a great worldwide tribulation.*

Background

John writes about the coming of Christ elsewhere, implying that His coming is imminent and stating that the hope of His coming purifies believers.

- ▶ John 14:1–3. Jesus is coming again for believers.
- ▶ 1 John 2:28. Jesus is coming and believers must be ready
- ▶ 1 John 3:2–3. Believers who place their hope on seeing Jesus when he comes, purify themselves.

Question

Does Revelation 3:10–11 speak of the rapture of the church?

- ▶ Is the reference to preserving believers *from* the time of worldwide tribulation?
- ▶ Is the reference to preserving believers *through* the time of worldwide tribulation?

Definitions

The concept of the “Rapture” comes from the verb “caught up” (Greek, *harpazō*; NET Bible, “suddenly caught up”) in 1 Thessalonians 4:17. There are four different views with regard to the timing of the Rapture:

- Pre-tribulation = *before* the seven-year Tribulation Period
- Mid-tribulation = *in the middle of* the seven-year Tribulation Period
- Pre-wrath = *just before* the final judgments in the final months of the seven-year Tribulation Period
- Post-tribulation = *after* the seven-year Tribulation Period

Key Passages

- Regarding the Tribulation Period:
 - ✓ Daniel 12:1
 - ✓ Zephaniah 1 (cp. 2:3)
 - ✓ Matthew 24:15–24
 - ✓ 2 Thessalonians 2:1–12

- Regarding the departure of living believers:
 - ✓ 1 Corinthians 15:51–52
 - ✓ 1 Thessalonians 1:10 (cp. 5:9; Revelation 6:17)
 - ✓ 1 Thessalonians 4:16–18

Revelation 3:10–11

Because you have kept the word [cf. v. 8] of My perseverance,
I also will keep you
 from the hour of testing,
 that *hour*
 which is about to come
 upon the whole world,
 to test those who dwell on the earth.

I am coming quickly; [cf. 22:7, 12, 20]
 hold fast what you have,
 so that no one will take your crown.

1. The Philadelphians have already endured.
2. Christ’s promise is not yet—it is future.
3. His keeping must be more perfect than their keeping.
4. The future time is for “testing.”
5. That testing will be brief (“hour”).
6. That testing will affect “the whole world.”
7. Christ identifies earth dwellers as those who will be tested.
8. Implies a contrast between the Philadelphian believers and the earth dwellers.

“Keep from” (only 2x in the New Testament)

John 17:15	Revelation 3:10
From evil	From testing/judgment
In the midst of evil already	Testing still future
Spiritual realm of the evil one	Moral realm of the evil one

During the Tribulation Period many believers will be persecuted and killed, not preserved:

- ✓ Revelation 6:9–11
- ✓ Revelation 7:9–14

Conclusion

- Revelation 3:10–11 does not speak directly about the Rapture of the church.
- Revelation 3:10–11 fits well with texts speaking directly about the Rapture.
- The Rapture is our blessed (Titus 2:13) and purifying (1 John 3:3) hope.