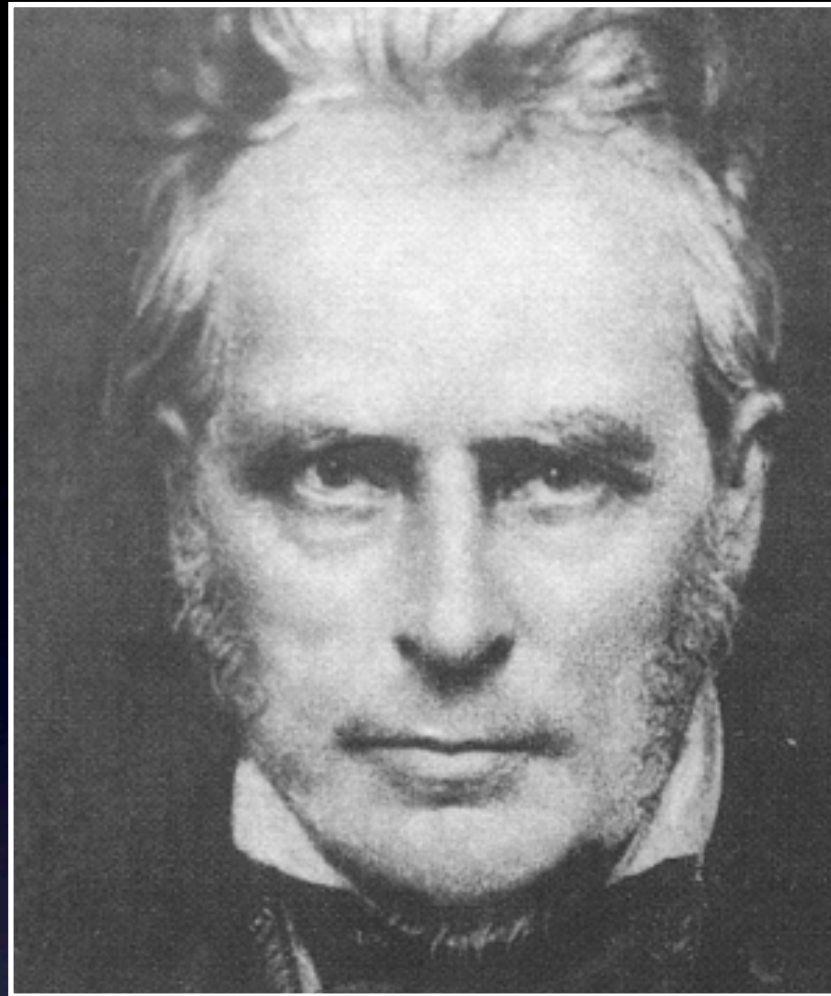


The Watershed Question:

**Is the Rapture Found in
Matthew 24:31?**

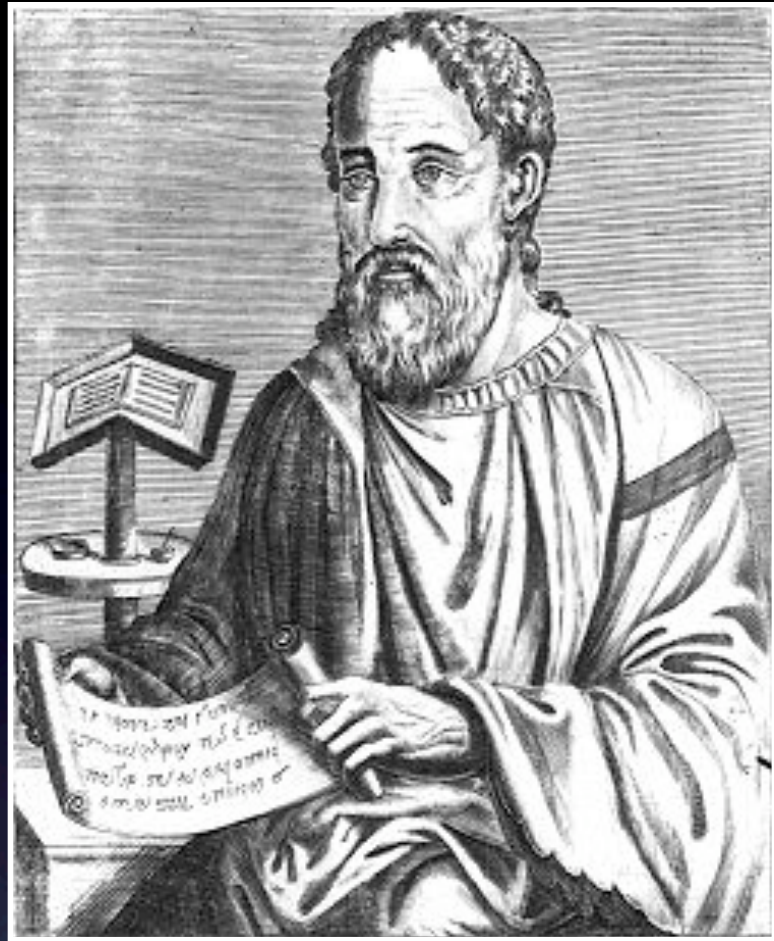
“And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”

Three Interpretations
to this Question:



Gathering: Regathering of Israel at the end of the “Tribulation Period”

John Nelson Darby
Pretribulationism
circa 1830



Gathering:

Christian mission to
“gather” the true people
of God in the Kingdom
through human
evangelization.

Eusebius of Caesarea
4th Century

Preterism

Developed in the
17–19th Century

Prewrath

Gathering:
The Rapture

Earliest Church
Writers

- The Didache (The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles) [70-110]
- The Epistle of Barnabas [100-120]
- Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho [150-165]
- The Shepherd of Hermes, Vision 4:3 [160]
- Ireneaus, Against Heresies (Book 5) [182-188]
- Tertullian, The Prescription Against Heretics [190-210]
- Hyppolytus, On Christ and Antichrist [220]
- Cyprian, Epistle 55 of Cyprian [252]

Christ is the Source

Matthew 24:3–4

As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the close of the age?” And Jesus answered them...

I Thessalonians 4:15

For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord

The Great Commission **binds** the Church to Jesus' instruction in the Olivet Discourse

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey **everything** I have **commanded you**. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

—Matt 28:19–20

Warning:

Do Not Be Deceived

Matthew 24:4

See that no one leads
you astray.

2 Thessalonians 2:3

Let no one deceive you
in any way.

Antichrist's Great Tribulation

Matthew 24	<u>Parallels</u>	1 & 2 Thess
15	Temple Abomination	2Th 2:4
21, 22	Antichrist's Opposition	2Th 2:3-4, 9
9-12	Apostasy of Many	2Th 2:3
22	Elect, Alive, and Survive	1Th 4:15, 17
22, 29-30	Persecution Cut Short	2Th 1:7

The *Parousia*

Matthew 24: 3, 27, 37, 39

...what will be the sign of your coming

...as the lightning comes...
so will be the coming of the Son of Man

...as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man [Again in v. 39].

1 Th 4:15; 2 Th 2:1, 8

...we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord...

Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him

[Antichrist brought] to nothing by the appearance of his coming

The Greek term *parousia* means:
PRESENCE

It is used 24 times, 17 times prophetically as in Jesus' Second Parousia (Coming). Most instances emphasize the arrival, but the continuing presence is implied.

It is a noun. Always in the singular.

The parousia is a comprehensive whole. In other words, it is not an instantaneous event like the rapture will be. Instead, it will cover a duration of complex events, fulfilling Divine purposes.

Analogy to the First Coming

In secular Greek, it was commonly used for a king's royal visit to another land.

Matthew's royal motif of Jesus as the fulfillment of the Davidic King is befitting — 4 times in the context of Christ coming back as KING!

Initiation of the *Parousia*

Matthew 24: 27, 30a

For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.

Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man...

1 Th 4:15a; 2 Th 2:8

For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord...

And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming.

Action in the Sky

Matthew 24

Parallels

1 & 2 Thess

30

Jesus with Clouds

1Th 4:17

31

Angelic Presence

1Th 4:16
2Th 1:7

31

Trumpet Call

1Th 4:16

Gathering

Matthew 24:31

And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will **gather** his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

1 Th 4:15; 2 Thess 2:1

Then we who are alive, who are left, will be **caught up** together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air...

Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being **gathered** together to him, we ask you, brothers,

Rapture Language

Matthew 24:31

And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will [episynagō] his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

2 Thess 2:1

Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being [episynagōgē] together to him, we ask you, brothers...

More Rapture Language

Matthew 24:40–41

Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken [paralambanō] and one left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken [paralambanō] and one left.

John 14:3

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take [paralambanō] you to myself, that where I am you may be also.

Exhortations

Matthew 24

37-41

43

37-41

29-30; 37-39

32-33

36

42-51

Parallels

Ungodly Oblivious

Thief in the Night

Sudden Destruction

Initiating God's Wrath

Not in Darkness

Do Not Set Dates

Be Expectant

1 & 2 Thess

1Th 5:3, 6-7

1Th 5:2, 4

1Th 5:2-3

1Th 5:1-3

1Th 5:4-5

1Th 5:1

1Th 5:6

<u>Matthew 24</u>	<u>Parallels</u>	<u>1&2 Thess</u>
3-4	Christ is the Source	1Th 4:15
4	Warning: Do Not Be Deceived	2Th 2:3
15	Antichrist's Temple Activity	2Th 2:4
21, 22	Opposition by Antichrist	2Th 2:3-4, 9
9-12	Apostasy of Many	2Th 2:3
22	Elect, Alive, and Survive	1Th 4:15, 17
22, 29-30	Persecution Cut Short	2Th 1:7
3, 27, 37, 39	The Parousia	1Th 4:15
27, 30	Initiation of the Parousia	1Th 4:15
30	Jesus with Clouds	1Th 4:17
31	Angelic Presence	1Th 4:16
31	Trumpet Call	1Th 4:16
31	Gathering	1Th 4:15-17
37-41	Ungodly Oblivious	1Th 5:3, 6-7
43	Thief in the Night	1Th 5:2, 4
37-41	Sudden Destruction	1Th 5:2-3
29-30; 37-39	Initiation of God's Wrath	1Th 5:1-3
32-33	Not in Darkness	1Th 5:4-5
36	Do Not Set Dates	1 Th 5:1
42-51	Be Expectant	1 Th 5:6

Consistency with Daniel

...There will be a time of distress unlike any other from the nation's beginning up to that time. But at that time your own people, all those whose names are found written in the book, will escape. Many of those who sleep in the dusty ground will awake... —Dan 12:1–2

For then there will be great tribulation unlike anything that has happened from the beginning of the world until now, or ever will happen. —Matt 24:21

Consistency with Revelation

So I said to him, “My lord, you know the answer.” Then he said to me, “These are the ones who have **come out of the great tribulation**. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb! (Rev 7:14).

Matthew 24

Parallels

Revelation

29

Celestial Signs

6th Seal

22

Out of the Great
Tribulation

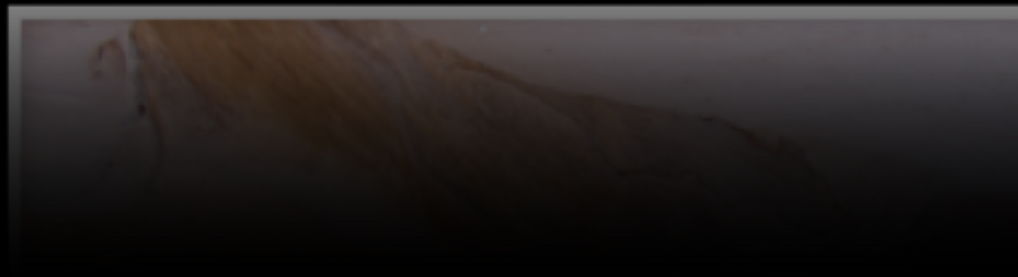
7:14

37–39

God's Wrath

7th Seal

**The Church Will
Indeed
Encounter the
Antichrist's
Great Tribulation**



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