

3. WHO ARE GOD'S ELECT?

A VITAL QUESTION THAT BEGS AN ANSWER

Let us begin our unravelling with the meaning of the word "ELECT". It means very simply "chosen" or "singled out". Throughout the entire 6000 year history of the world in which we live, there have only been two such groups chosen or singled out by God Himself. The first such group chosen by God was the Hebrew race known as the Jews. They are also known as "God's Chosen People". Undoubtedly the ELECT of God. The second chosen or singled out group is the Church of Jesus Christ, not every church attender or organisation, but as the writer to the Hebrews puts it *HEBREWS 12 v 11 "...the Church of the first born which are written in heaven"*. So the second chosen or singled out group is undoubtedly Christ's true Church, His ELECT. There are a number of scriptures in both Old and New Testaments confirming that both these groups are God's ELECT. The Jews the ELECT of the Old and the Church the ELECT of the New. Just two scriptures follow from among many to illustrate this assertion.

THE JEWISH ELECT

*"For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine ELECT, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.
And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine ELECT shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there."
ISAIAH 45 v 4, 65 v 9*

Israel and descendants seen as the "ELECT of God".

THE CHURCH OR CHRISTIAN ELECT

*"Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia,
ELECT according to the foreknowledge of God the Father..."
1 PETER 1 v 1 - 2*

Another thought with reference to our question

WHO ARE GOD'S ELECT?

The pre-tribulation rapture teachers have no solid scripture base on which to base their doctrine. Even teachers who are respected and sound elsewhere in their ministries have the most tenuous, even woolly offerings in this realm, and pad them out with sound bites. One such, which has been heard numerous times over the last fifty years, is that the tribulation period is just the time of "Jacob's Trouble", just a Jewish event. Jeremiah refers to Jacob's trouble in JEREMIAH 30 v 7. The fact is that Jeremiah made his prophecy around six hundred and fifty years before the Church began to exist. Thus it was impossible for Jeremiah to refer to those experiencing the tribulation in any other way.

THE ELECT OF MATTHEW TWENTY FOUR

The same teachers state that the ELECT referred to in Matthew 24 are Jewish. This assertion has no warrant whatsoever in scripture. In fact, the ELECT of Matthew twenty four have to be the Church. This is proved by reading

MATTHEW 24 v 22

*And except those days should be shortened, there should be no flesh be saved:
but for the ELECT's sake those days shall be shortened.*

Just ten verses later the same ELECT are referred to again.

MATTHEW 24 v 31

And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his ELECT from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

If ever there was a Q.E.D. it's here. If the ELECT that cause the days of the tribulation to be shortened are exclusively Jewish, then the ELECT that are part of the rapture and resurrection at the last trumpet have to be an exclusively Jewish group also. To suggest that this is truth is ridiculous and utterly inconsistent, but these are the problems faced by teachers presenting the erroneous pre-tribulation rapture deceit.

WILL THE JEWS ALSO SUFFER IN THE TRIBULATION?

By the time that the ELECT are referred to in Matthew Twenty four, Antichrist will have broken his seven year covenant with the Jews. Every other worship, apart from that of him and his image, will be proscribed under pain of death. There is no doubt that for the remaining period of the tribulation, the Jews will again be a persecuted people. Under the same rod will be the true church of Jesus Christ and many of Christ's followers will be tribulation martyrs. So the only possible conclusion that can be reached is that both the Jews and the Church are God's ELECT and both will suffer under Antichrist in the tribulation period. Jacob's trouble the tribulation will certainly be. But, without a doubt, it will be the Church's trouble also. We conclude with a thought applicable to every section or topic that we have considered.

PRE-TRIBULATION RAPTURE A DANGEROUS DELUSION

Strong words, but are they too strong? There is a whole generation in our western world which, because of its sin and God defiance, is on the brink of the abyss. Some of these have adopted the posture so graphically portrayed by Peter in

2 PETER 3 v 4

And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

Others, although certainly not the scoffers referred to by Peter in the previous verse, yet dreamily remain unconcerned, holding on to a false hope that they will be whisked away at the first sign of trouble brewing. Such a hope is fallacious and has no biblical support. It has no support from Church History. As these words are penned, in countries all over the world, Christians are being persecuted, even martyred. For them "tribulation" is the norm. We must prepare this generation for "tribulation" that will be the forerunner of the "Great Tribulation".

CORRIE TEN BOOM AND HER WISE WORDS

Corrie paid a great price in the concentration camps of Germany for giving sanctuary to the Jews. Her beloved sister perished in those camps. Her story, which is a classic, is told both in book and film.

Recently a comment made by Corrie Ten Boom, came to your writer's notice. It is appended here. It is taken from "When Jesus Returns" by the author, David Pawson.

Corrie Ten Boom says: -

"I have been in countries where the saints are already suffering terrible persecution. In China the Christians were told: Don't worry. Before the tribulation comes, you will be translated, raptured. Then came a terrible persecution. Millions of Christians were tortured to death. Later I heard a Bishop from China say, sadly: We have failed. We should have made the people strong for persecution rather than telling them Jesus would come first. Turning to me, he said: Tell the people how to be strong in times of persecution, how to stand when the tribulation comes-to stand and not faint. I feel I have a divine mandate to go and tell the people of this world that it is possible to be strong in the Lord Jesus Christ. We are in training for the tribulation. Since I have gone already through prison for Jesus' sake, and since I met that bishop from China, now every time I read a good Bible text I think: Hey, I can use that in the time of tribulation. 'Then I write it down and learn it by heart.'"

She is now with the Lord, having been through her own tribulation. When we go through ours, whether that be personal, local or universal, may we be among the 'overcomers', as she was and is.