

## Introductory Statements

One of the most hotly contested events in human history & in biblical interpretation is the Rapture of the church. Many televangelists<sup>i</sup>, pastors<sup>ii</sup>, and authors<sup>iii</sup> have made a career for themselves as “experts” in that which the North American populace is clamoring to know about – the future / the end times / the end of the world & history as we know it – the theological word for this is “Eschatology”. These looks into the future generate excitement as they expound on the worldwide & cosmic drama portrayed in the book of Revelation – plagues, death on a grand scale, famine, wars, angelic judgments, asteroid strikes, etc. Yet, as exciting as those things may be, the person who considers the implications of the judgments of Revelation desires to avoid them. Some who argue against the pre-Tribulation Rapture say that it is just avoidance of the wrath of God being poured out on the world that becomes the impetus for believers to come up with some plan of escape which seems plausible and thus provides hope, so they argue that the Rapture is not part of the biblical text, and is thus the invention of man.

One argument centers around the fact that God does not as a rule spare His people by taking them out of times of judgment, but rather brings them through those times of suffering & persecution, with the expressed purpose of making them more like Christ. Therefore, why would He change now and suddenly remove His people from that judgment? This is a common argument, but it fails to recognize some examples of God sparing His people from times of judgment – like Enoch in Genesis 5 who did not die but was taken to heaven before the flood; like Israel who was removed en masse from Egypt & were spared the results of many of the plagues which befell Egypt, including their miraculous escape through the Red Sea; or Rahab, the harlot of Jericho who was spared as Israel captured and decimated everyone else in the city except her and whoever had stayed in her house during the attack. We must also remember the escape of Lot from Sodom with the help of angels; Peter’s miraculous release from prison by an angel in Acts 12:1-11; etc. ①

Although it is apparently God’s usual strategy is to let His people experience the suffering and the evil of the world for His purposes, it is incorrect to say that there are no examples of Him sparing people, even in a miraculous way so they do not have to go through those times of trial facing them.

In reality, there is more bible evidence for the Pre-Tribulation Rapture than you might think, although some of what there is can be open to interpretive differences. Although the word for rapture in the Greek is found in I Thess.4:17, it is not translated as ‘rapture’ but as “caught up”. No single verse expressly lays out this exact idea, but when a number of related passages are put together, combining types, shadows, prophecies and other fine points of Scripture, it seems that a Rapture of the Church is inevitable.

What exactly is “the Rapture”? It refers to a catching away of Christians to be with Christ while they are still alive and breathing, who will be changed to the glorified state instantaneously during the ascent to meet Christ in the air. Obviously, those who are so “raptured” will avoid physical death. It has been recently popularized by the fictional “Left Behind” series of novels by Tim Lahaye & Jerry Jenkins, which ran from 1995 to 2007. The series is based on the bible but is still fictional, yet many people do agree that

at some time in the future, millions of Christians will instantly disappear, leaving behind jewellery, clothing, accessories along with unsaved loved ones. It is this series along with “headline” theology by people like Jack Van Impe & Hal Lindsey that tend to sensationalize the Rapture which has motivated many theologians who do not believe in the Rapture to so vehemently oppose it.

The Rapture is not to be confused with Jesus’ Second Coming, which occurs at least 7 years later. It is abundantly clear that Jesus returns to earth finally & very publicly (“every eye will see Him”) at the end of the 7 year Tribulation period which is described in Revelation in some detail.

Among those who do believe in a Rapture of the Church, there are 3 main views of the Rapture itself: a.) Pre-Trib: it occurs before the Tribulation period begins; b.) Mid-Trib: it occurs at the 3 ½ year mark of the Tribulation, just prior to the final 3 ½ years or the “Great Tribulation”; or c.) Post-Trib: it occurs at the end of the Tribulation period just as Christ descends with the rest of the saints from heaven. It is my belief that the biblical evidence supports a Pre-Tribulation Rapture.

There are 4 main Rapture texts – I Cor. 15:50-55; I Thess. 4:13-18; II Thess. 2:1-12; & Rev. 3:10. There are other minor texts which seem to support this doctrine as well, and we will look at some of them as we go through this lesson, along with Gen. 5:21-24 – the account of Enoch, who is taken to heaven alive before the flood comes, and supports the Rapture in type. Some of the texts cited by (especially) sensationalist writers are not Rapture texts but usually have to do with Christ’s Second Coming or Parousia, which can easily confuse those who do not have a handle on the prophecies of that event, which usually are tied to the Millennial Kingdom of Christ, which is set up after His Second Coming. ②

Why deal with the Rapture at this point in our study of Revelation? This is the logical place to discuss the Rapture because one of the bible evidences for the Rapture is found in the fact that Rev. 3:22 is the last mention of the Church in Revelation until Rev. 19:7 (“the Bride”), Rev. 21:9 (“Bride”) & Rev. 22:16 (“the churches”). Surely some anomaly must take place for the church to be missing from the entire 7 year account of the final Tribulation on earth, and the Rapture does seem to answer that problem. Interestingly, to support this contention, notice **Rev. 2:7**, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22 & compare **Rev. 13:9**.

The way one interprets the biblical data for the Rapture will usually come down to their theology regarding who the Church is. If one believes that the Church & Israel are one and the same entity, they will not believe in the Rapture, because any mention of Israel (to them) in Revelation is talking about the church, which apparently is still on earth, but just never called the church for some unknown reason. In order to satisfy the main issue in determining whether or not a Rapture is taught in the bible, we must first determine if in fact the church & Israel are one and the same thing or are separate entities in God’s dealings with “His people” on earth. We will look at 3 categories<sup>iv</sup> of proofs to support the Rapture:

- The Nature of the Church
- The Nature of the Tribulation
- The Nature of the Second Coming

The same people who refuse to accept a Rapture doctrine are also usually deficient in their understanding of the Doctrine of the Millennial Kingdom. Their positions are

known as Amillennial ( there is no literal 1000 year reign of Christ on earth ); or Post-Millennial ( Christ will return to set up His kingdom after the church has subdued the earth, and He returns to an earth where sin has virtually already been eliminated and almost everyone is a believer ).

## The Nature of the Church

One of the main arguments for the Rapture that we glean from Scripture is the nature of the Church versus the nature of Israel. Since early in the OT, God has dealt with Israel as His people ( Gen. 12 / Deut. 7:6-8 ), nurturing & protecting them, as well as disciplining them as that was needed. He put up with their faithlessness, grumbling & idolatry and provided them with promises, the land, & a Messiah to provide the righteousness they needed but could not supply on their own. They rejected Him and the revealing of the foreordained Cross was the result, and so God as He had planned, put them on hold and since about AD 32 is operating through the Church and focusing His salvific attention on the Gentiles, although a remnant of Jews is being saved.

This time of the Gentiles / the Church began in earnest as recorded in Acts 2 at Pentacost after Jesus had ascended to heaven. The church is first mentioned in Matt. 16:18 and Jesus there says “I will build My church” – future tense; not “add to it”, or “make it larger” – therefore, it did not yet exist, as Israel is not the Church. It is not found in the OT and has not replaced Israel permanently. Note **Rom. 11:1-6,11,14,17-23,25-26**.

While the church has both Jews & Gentiles in it, God’s program for redemption since Acts 2 has been to focus on the Gentiles. That will change and the pendulum will swing back to the Jews at some point yet future once the Tribulation period kicks into gear for 7 years, and then God’s focus will return to the Jewish people for salvation. That is why we read a lot about Israel in Revelation 4-19, and nothing about the church ( except the apostate church ). Many say that when Israel is mentioned in Revelation, that is just the church – but throughout the NT, the Holy Spirit has the writers call the church “the church”, and it is understood that this church contains a remnant of Israel within it, but Israel is never called the church in the NT ( or in the OT ). So why would John suddenly call the church Israel? This is especially true as he just finished writing letters to 7 churches. Notice also **I Cor. 10:32** – and the distinctions there – Jews, Greeks and the church of God. ③

Israel’s expectations are different from the church’s. Israel anticipated a kingdom on earth as soon as Messiah came – just read the OT prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah, Zechariah, etc. and this becomes obvious. Their promises were tied to the Land of Israel. Notice in **Acts 1:6** that even the disciples were still ( after all that had happened ) expecting that Kingdom, because this was the hope of Israel. Well, what is the hope of the church? Does it not strike you as odd that, after all that had happened ( Christ’s crucifixion ), if it indeed was the last straw & Christ was done with Israel for good, that Christ would reply the way He does in **v. 7**? Yet, so many people today write off Israel by saying that the church has permanently replaced Israel and will receive all her promises...although Israel still receives the curses God promised.

The hope of the church is to go to heaven and spend eternity with God & Christ see JN 14:1-4 ). The Jews hoped for resurrection and a place in the Kingdom on earth, while the

church, although aware of the Kingdom promises, longs to be in the Father's heavenly home.

The Jews understood resurrection as a concept – cf. Job 19:25-26; Isa. 26:19; Dan. 2:2; etc., therefore, when Paul in **I Cor. 15:51** speaks of a mystery in the chapter that is about resurrection details, the mystery is not resurrection! It is the fact that a generation of believers will go to be with Christ without dying physically – the Rapture. Read **vv. 51-55**, which we will examine later in more detail.

Israel & the church are 2 separate entities. If they are one & the same, then we must concede that the church will go through the Tribulation period, because Israel does for sure. We will examine under the heading – The Nature of the Tribulation – why it is for Israel & not the church. We'll look at it being “the time of Jacob's trouble”; as Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week; and examine the fact that during the Tribulation Israel will become evangelists, the persecuted saints, and the redeemed sheep who will enter the Millennial Kingdom in human bodies while the goats will be eradicated from the earth and judged. God's wrath falls on the world during the Tribulation – the world is judged & Israel is judged so that a majority might be saved, whereas the church is not appointed to undergo God's wrath – Rom. 5:9; 8:1; I Thess. 1:10; 5:9; Rev. 3:10.

## The Church Defined

The Greek word translated “Church” is “ecclesia”, meaning the called out ones. It is used 4 different ways in the NT:

1. ) an assembly of people – a general usage, could be a political gathering, a crowd ( Acts 19:39 ), people gathered to worship ( as in Hebrews ), or Israel as a group called out of Egypt. ④
2. ) a specific gathering of people – cf. Acts 8:1,3 – church here speaks of a very distinct group of people in a specific local area – see also Acts 11:22,26 ( church at Antioch ). It can also mean a group of local churches. Therefore, a church is a church; several churches are the church; the compendium of churches around the world is the church.
3. ) The body of Christ – cf. Acts 12:1 – Herod hated & attacked the church.
4. ) The Bride of Christ – cf. Eph. 5:25,29-32 – Israel was called a wife to God ( a Harlot, unfaithful wife ), while the church is called Christ's chaste virgin bride.

Out of all of these definitions, only the first one ever refers to Israel, because they were called out of Egypt. It is never used of Israel as part of the body of Christ, as professing believers or as a local congregation. When Jews are being referred to as a local congregation, it is called a synagogue, even as late as in Rev. 2:9. In the OT, Israel was not God's “Bride” but His idolatrous or harlot wife – see Hosea.

The point is this; if Israel & the church are 2 different entities, then God can treat them differently. He can leave Israel on earth and Rapture the church. They have separate beginnings, separate purposes by God and can have separate endings.

Go back to Matt. 16:18 & notice something there. “the gates of Hell will not prevail against it ( the church )”. Yet, in Rev. 13:7, the saints are conquered. These saints cannot be the church Christ built, but they can be saved Israelites during the Tribulation who are technically not “the church”, which must be gone. The true church is not found in the Tribulation – only saved Jews and the apostate church / those who

had not been raptured because they were apostate and not true believers – who do fall under Satan’s power, because he will control the false church and will ironically use the false church to persecute those who are being saved.

Notice Acts 11:15 where Peter’s report to the Jerusalem Council mentions the fact that the Holy Spirit fell on Cornelius and other gentiles “just as on us at the beginning” – the beginning of what? Not when they began to follow Christ, but at Pentacost. He is referring to the beginning of the church. According to I Cor. 12:13, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is what puts us into the body of the church, and recall I Cor. 10:32 again – 3 separate entities ( Jews, Greeks, the Church ). The church started at Pentacost and ends at the Rapture – it is an historical parenthesis. Look at **Col. 1:26-27** – further evidence of the unique nature of the church – “Christ in you”. This was something the Jews did not know about, that their Messiah would indwell them. Cf. JN 14:20; 15:1-6.

Ephesians 3:1-12 clearly delineates the distinct nature of the church, proving that it cannot be Israel. What is the mystery Paul refers to in v. 6? That Gentiles are partakers of the gospel too. The Jews did not know this and in fact, Peter was astounded in Acts when God saved Cornelius and other gentiles. John MacArthur tells us this; *“We are not Israel. We are not the new Israel. We do not receive the promises of Israel. They are still for Israel. If you have the church receiving all the promises for Israel, then God was a liar, because God made promises to Israel which He is not keeping. And so we believe there must be a distinction. The church is unique, it is separate.”*<sup>v</sup>

The true church will be kept from the Tribulation, but the false church inhabited by unbelievers will not. We’ve already seen Rev. 2:20-22 – those who are unrepentant will go into Tribulation; and in Rev. 3:10, the repentant will be kept from the Tribulation. The Tribulation is designed for false teachers, idolators, the wicked & unrepentant, hypocrites, and Israel. That is God’s design.

### **The Absence of any Record of the True Church During the Tribulation**

It is a well publicized argument that the church is not mentioned again in Revelation from 3:22 until 22:16. It is apparent during the book after chapter 4 that the church is in heaven worshipping God & the Lamb, interacting with the angels and with other believers, while the evangelism occurring on the earth is being carried out by converted Jewish evangelists ( 144,000 of them – Rev. 7 ), by an angel calling out from heaven ( Rev. 14:6 ) by 2 OT style prophets in Jerusalem ( Rev. 11 ) & by an eagle proclaiming the gospel from the air ( Rev. 8:13 ). Since the church’s mandate ( Matt. 28 ) is to go and make disciples, why is there none of that effort by the church recorded in Revelation if the church is there?

There will be religion in the Tribulation period. The destruction of the harlot ( Rev 17 ) is proof of that. But it will apparently be an ecumenical religion which has combined all sorts of religious liberals, heretics, professed believers who were really unsaved, false religions like Mormons, RC’s, etc. All these will be cooperating in tolerance of their differences and will be under the spell of the Antichrist & False Prophet.

The absence of the phrase “what the Spirit says to the churches” in Rev. 13:9 after 7 times being used to end the sentence, “He who has an ear, let him hear” in the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> chapters is also a very interesting difference. Now, verse 10 mentions “the saints”, but this does not have to mean the church – just the ones who are saved, and since the

144,000 evangelists have been in operation since chapter 7, people are being saved and becoming saints ( “called out ones” ) – and the bulk of these people will be Jews.

God is not called “Father” ( the church’s favorite name for God ) from Rev. 3:21 on, but He is referred to as Almighty God, Lord, etc.

The multitudes seen praising God in the heavens in those magnificent scenes of joyous praise in Rev. 4; 5; 19 along with the elders and the angels are the church triumphant in heaven forever, praising God & Christ. There is no indication anywhere in the book of Revelation that the church is anywhere on the earth while God’s wrath is being poured out on the wicked world. Any saints mentioned in the text are of Jewish origin – from the 144,000 evangelists to the 2 OT prophets to the narrative of Israel vs Satan in Rev. 12 ff. The Tribulation is all about God’s wrath on the wicked and the resurgence of God’s redemptive plan for Israel. There is no need for the church to go through it.

In Rev. 4:4, a scene in heaven, it is likely that at least 12 of the 24 elders on the 24 thrones are representatives of the church, which is already in heaven 2 chapters before the chronological unfolding of the plagues and judgments of the Tribulation begin to take place. We won’t get into this here, but suffice to say that we will prove that from Scripture when we get to Rev. 4:4 in our study.

## The Nature of the Tribulation Period

The Tribulation was not designed for the church to go through. We’ve already noted that Jer. 30:7 calls it “the time of Jacob’s trouble”, giving it a unique Jewish flavour, but in an even earlier reference – in **Deut. 4:26-31** ( especially v. 30 ) we find key elements of the end times including mentions of tribulation and latter days. We also see the remnant mentioned here ( v. 27 ), & the salvation of Israel ( v. 31 ) based on God’s covenant with Israel’s forefathers. ⑥

Let’s take a closer look at **Jer. 30:7-10**. The “that day” is a clear reference to “the Day of the Lord” ( which throughout OT prophecy speaks of His end times judgment on the world ), and it is “so great that there is none like it” – so this “day” is a unique one. The focus of that day is as “a time of distress for Jacob ( ESV )” ie. Israel / then it says that “he shall be saved out of it.” It does not say “kept from it” as Rev. 3:10 says of the church, but “saved out of it” or “during it”.

Take note of the flow of prophetic thought in vv. 8-10 as well. “That day” is mentioned again / the foreigners’ control over Israel will be broken / God will be served / “David their king” ( Christ ) will be “raised up” or made to sit upon David’s throne – the Millennial Kingdom / again in v. 10 salvation is mentioned “from far away” – IOW – from all over the world “in that day”. The rest of Jer. 30 talks about Israel at rest after that time, but note vv. 23-24 – tribulation with purpose & intention – to restore & save Israel, and to punish the wicked who have oppressed her. This is certainly obvious in the Revelation record of the Tribulation. We have already noted above that the Revelation people prevalent in evangelism are Jewish, & the 2 witnesses are OT people.

Note **Zephaniah 1:14-18** & then **Zechariah 12:1-3, 10**. Israel “will see Him whom they pierced.” Go to **John 19:37** & note the wording there carefully. They will not see this from heaven, as if they had been raptured, but from earth, weeping & mourning because they see Him and realize their great error in rejecting Him that has caused the

Kingdom to be delayed and the horrors of the Tribulation to be unleashed on the world. This will take place at the end of the Tribulation period because it is only then that “every eye will see Him”. The Rapture is going to be a secret event, known only to the participants, and our instantaneous disappearance will leave billions of people on earth left to try to solve the problem of where millions of people disappeared to. As He returns by Rev. 19, the church is returning with Him from the sky.

There are numerous OT passages regarding the Tribulation & the second coming of Christ, and in each passage, we see Israel and the wicked being mentioned – never a word about righteous gentiles or the church. By God’s design, the church will not go through the Tribulation period, so they must be removed prior to its’ beginning.

## Daniel’s 70 Weeks

Arguably one of the strongest arguments that the Tribulation is chiefly about Israel is found in Daniel’s prophecy of the 70 weeks in Dan. 9:24-27. This prophecy is given to Daniel by Gabriel so that he might record what will take place in the future for Israel, and v. 24 tells us that *“70 weeks are decreed about your people ( Israel ) and your holy city ( Jerusalem ), to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint the most holy place.”* Emphasis is mine.

These 70 weeks are the final weeks of Israel from a specific start point – which we will look at – to the arrival of Messiah; the arrival of Antichrist, and the final acts of history as mankind enters the eternal state & the Kingdom of God. The wording of this verse leave no uncertainty that it is referring to the end.

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When it refers to “weeks” here ( the word usually means a normal 7 day week ), it is using a week in a prophetic sense, as “heptades” or weeks of years. Therefore 7 weeks of years x 70 = 490 years. If we can determine when this time period begins, we can know the end times when Israel’s history will wrap up. First, some math – prophetic years are 360 days ( Jewish calendar ), not 365. This is based on times given in Genesis and throughout the OT.

Verse 25 gives us some insight. We are looking for a word or decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. And we find such a decree in **Nehemiah 2:7-8** where we are told that King Artaxerxes gives Nehemiah such an order, and we are told that this took place in the month of Nisan in the 20<sup>th</sup> year of his reign from Susa. Since no date is given in Nisan, traditionally it is understood from Hebrew record keeping that the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month is being referred to. This coincides with our secular calendar as March 14, 445 BC.

Now, the 70 weeks are divided in this prophecy, and that must have a reason behind it, and we find that it does, which we will see shortly. The division is 7 weeks plus 62 weeks ( ESV is misleading here – NASB & NKJV are better ) until the Messiah is revealed, followed by 1 week. From the going out of this decree of Artaxerxes in 3/14/445, we add 69 prophetic weeks of years or 483 years of 360 days and arrive at a figure of 173,880 days. That brings us to April 6, AD 32.

What event would fall on that date which could fit the prophecy of “the coming of an anointed One”? It is not the nativity, because from Luke’s gospel, we find that Jesus’

birth would have fallen somewhere between 4 & 1 BC, during the reign of Herod the Great, with Augustus Caesar on the Emperor's throne in Rome. Also, it had to be the year that Quirinius was Governor of Syria. When you connect those features of history, you realize that this event Daniel prophesied was not Jesus' virgin birth.

Luke tells us that John the Baptist began his ministry in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius Caesar – LK 3:1 - and that Jesus was “about 30 years of age when He began to minister – LK 3:23, and we know from the gospel accounts, especially the records of Jesus' attendance at Passovers in Jerusalem, that His ministry lasted almost exactly 3 years. At the end of His ministry, 3 years in, the event occurs which Daniel is referring to – turn to LK 19:28-44<sup>vi</sup> - The Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem. If the calculations are correct<sup>vii</sup>, this was Sunday, April 6, AD 32, 6 days before Jesus would be crucified. It certainly fits the profile of the coming of the Messiah that Daniel predicted.

Notice with me **Zech. 9:9**. Zechariah even adds to the prophetic picture to make sure that when this stellar and unique, calculable event takes place, His people would recognize who He was! And Luke's account even details the acquiring of and riding on this donkey's colt. Remember that throughout His ministry, Jesus told those He healed not to make Him known, not to tell anyone who did this for them, etc.? Now, notice **Luke 19:37-40**. This is His announcement of His arrival as their King, and if the people were made to be silent, God would cause the rocks to cry out! Notice **Luke 19:41-42** and the mention of “this day”- this was the day they should have recognized Him. They just had to know how to add, and to see prophecy revealed.

Five days later, Jesus is taken and crucified, fulfilling Daniel 9:26 – He is cut off at the end of the 69<sup>th</sup> week of years. Then Daniel tells us of the people of the prince to come ( Antichrist ) after this to destroy the city and sanctuary. This supposedly took place in AD 70 under Titus of Rome, but he is not this prince, because when Jesus died and the veil of the temple was torn, it signified that Judaism & Israel were done for a time – set aside in God's plan. In fact, if the 70<sup>th</sup> week were to follow immediately on the heels of Jesus' death, we would not even get to AD 70, just AD 39 or 40. This leaves 1 week of the 70 unaccounted for, but here is a clue for you to ponder.

Since we are told that no one can know the time when Christ will return, but Daniel 9 tells us that it is measurable based on 69 weeks + 1 week, and He didn't return in AD 39, then something has interrupted the flow of weeks and we now see there is design in the prophecy that does not just say 70 weeks and leave it at that. God has placed a gap there, and that gap is the Church. He has put Israel's program of redemption on hold for a time determined by Him ( **LK 21:24** – the times of the Gentiles have to be fulfilled & note **Rom. 11:11,25,26** ) and once the church has been moved off the scene, He will again turn His attention back to Israel, as Paul notes in Romans 11.

This prince ( Antichrist ) will make a pact or covenant with Israel for 1 week ( of years ) – Dan. 9:27 – but will break it after ½ of the week – 3.5 years in ( The Great Tribulation ) when he decides to exalt himself in the Temple and to be called god which is known as “the abomination of desolation” – cf. **II Thess. 2:4**. Notice these passages regarding the Antichrist – **Dan. 8:23,24; 9:26; 11:36,37**. Daniel's prophecy will be fulfilled to the letter in a literal sense. The church is a parenthesis between God's first dealings with Israel, and His last.

## The Nature of the Second Coming

## The Imminent Return of Christ

Christ could return at any time. We are told in numerous passages that the return of Jesus Christ is imminent, that there are no signs we are waiting for before this occurs. Note these verses: Matt. 24:42,44; 25:13,34,35; Luke 12:37-40; Phil. 4:5; I Thess. 4:15-17; I Thess. 5:2; II Thess. 3:5; Titus 2:13; James 5:8,9; II Pet. 3:10; Rev. 3:11; 16:15; 22:12.

Yet, there are other passages which teach us that there are signs to watch for which will precede Christ's return: Matt. 24:3,27,30,31; Luke 21:27-36; II Thess. 2:1-5; II Pet. 3:11-12; Jude 14; Zech. 12:10; 14:1-9.

There are passages which teach that Christ will return "like a thief", and that "no one knows the day or hour except the Father", yet there are other verses that point to specific events we can use as signs to tell us that His coming will occur soon – even at a specific time (ie. 7 years after the Tribulation begins), then it stands to reason that there must be 2 separate & different comings of Christ being described. The first is for His church – the Rapture (an event without sign or warning) – where His people will meet Him in the air after an immediate transforming of their bodies. The 2<sup>nd</sup> is His Parousia – where every eye shall see Him, even those who pierced Him, coming in the clouds in great majesty to wrap up history, judge the wicked and begin the Millennial Kingdom (Rev. 19). There are 2 different ways of looking for the promise of His coming. For those who await His imminent return, which is a signless event and could happen any time, we long to be with Him and to see Him as He is; to finally escape this world's sin and get away from our all too common Romans 7 experiences. For those who long for His parousia, and anticipate they will be on earth to see it rather than coming back as one of His saints from heaven, they long for His appearing, knowing it will come after the judgments & plagues and knowing that it will finally bring final righteous judgment. That would be the mindset which we find in heaven in Rev. 19:1-8. 9

In addition to this, if as some say, the Rapture takes place at the end of the Tribulation, then all the saints go up, meet Jesus in the air & return immediately with Him in glorified bodies to earth. The wicked are all killed according to Rev. 19:21, and if all have been raptured, there are no unglorified saints remaining to populate earth for the Millennial Kingdom which according to prophecy requires people who are human, unglorified, having children, dying, farming, etc. See Isa. 11:6-9; 65:19-25 for example. If all are in that state, then there will also be no way for a rebellion to occur at the end of the 1,000 year reign of Christ as Rev. 20:7-10. The only thing that makes any sense of combining the Tribulation, Second Coming and Millennial Kingdom together is a pre-Tribulation Rapture of the Church. Acts 1:6-11 tells us that He will return the same way He left in His ascension – visibly, in great glory, to a specific place – the Mt. of Olives (Zech. 14: 1-16). No one will see Him but the true church at the Rapture, but all will see Him at His 2<sup>nd</sup> coming. These are 2 different events in God's timetable!

## The Key Rapture Passages Examined

### I Corinthians 15:50-55

This is the key passage in the discussion of the Rapture, because it has the elements of a call upward (at the last trump), a dynamic and instantaneous change of position for

believers ( “in the twinkling of an eye” ) where they are translated immediately without dying into an incorruptible body capable of living forever in heaven.

The immediate context of I Cor. 15 is “resurrection” and Paul explains the nature of the resurrected body as compared to our current physical bodies. Throughout this chapter, Paul deals with the concept of resurrection of a person who has died, so for the most part, regarding resurrection from the dead. However, at v. 51, he introduces what he calls “a mystery”, something previously unknown ( as yet unrevealed by God ), so the topic changes here to a concept for which the context of the rest of the chapter has prepared us to receive.

Since entrance into heaven is impossible in a physical body like the one we now inhabit ( v. 50 ), then what happens to those alive when the Rapture occurs? Now, there will be people left alive when Christ returns the Second time – cf. Rev. 19: 17-21. Some of these will be Christians ( this is where the Judgment of the Sheep & Goats will come in – cf. Matt. 25:34-40 ) but most will be the wicked who are killed. Paul is not referring to this time period in I Cor. 15, although some will be saved and awaiting Christ’s return at that point. It is also true that at that point, these people would know when He is coming because there are signs given to see when the Tribulation of 7 years is ending. The Rapture has no signs awaiting fulfillment before He comes, but there are many prophecies that must be fulfilled before Christ returns – Antichrist will be revealed; a false prophet with supernatural power will rise to power; 2 OT style witnesses will prophesy from Jerusalem; an angel in heaven will preach the gospel; all the plagues of Revelation 6-19 will take place; etc.

The mystery that Paul refers to here is that a generation of believers will be suddenly changed and transported to be with Christ, bypassing the normal physical death that would propel their spirit to be with Christ to await the resurrection of their bodies which will then be joined with their new bodies. This is the idea also picked up by Paul in I Thess. 4:13-18 & II Thess. 2:1-12. 10

The change Paul describes in I Cor. 15:51 is said to take place instantly, and obviously refers to an alternative to death ( “shall not sleep” ), and in v. 52, it happens “in the twinkling of an eye” ( a millisecond ). At that speed, it cannot possibly include death & resurrection so he is referring to something mysterious, & much different from our normal expectation of death before heaven, as Paul indicates.

He told us in v. 50 that a change must take place because our physical bodies are incapable of living in heaven, and notice how he explains that in vv. 42-44. At the Rapture, this change will be instantaneous and eternal. Enoch & Elijah, the only 2 humans mentioned in the bible who entered heaven without dying would have, of necessity, experienced this change also.

In v. 52, Paul mentions an event that coincides with this change – “at the last trumpet”. I Thess. 4:16 also mentions this trumpet, and many have argued about what this “last trumpet” is. It is the trumpet blast that will signify the end of the church age and will be the last trumpet the church will hear on earth because the church invisible will be gone. Some are confused by this “trumpet” because they relate it to the last trumpet judgment of Rev. 11:15-19, but it does not have to be nor is it referring to that event. The 7 Trumpet judgments are not even the last judgments of Revelation, so even this 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet does not bring Christ to earth yet. So what does “the last trumpet” refer to?

One commentator<sup>viii</sup> compared it to the trumpet commands of the Roman army, and these would have been well known in Corinth. As the army got ready to move on, there were 3 trumpet blasts, used as signals. The first meant “strike tents and prepare to depart”; the 2<sup>nd</sup> meant “fall in or gather in ranks”; and the 3<sup>rd</sup> signified “march away”. He uses the analogy in our Christian lives – 1<sup>st</sup> blast “awake out of spiritual sleep”; the 2<sup>nd</sup>, “fall in beside others of the faith & worship God”, and the 3<sup>rd</sup>, is the one Paul mentions here. I think he may have a good point here, because although the nature of the last trumpet in I Corinthians 15 may be ambiguous, the one in I Thess. 4:16 is definitely not the trumpet of the 7<sup>th</sup> angel in Revelation 11. This text of I Cor. 15 is probably the clearest text to describe the Rapture, but there are others which add to the evidence.

## I Thessalonians 4:13-18

Paul is addressing a concern from the church at Thessalonica. They feel that their deceased companions may have missed the resurrection and were now doomed to remain in the grave. Remember that Christianity was young here and people were just beginning to come to grips with what salvation by grace was all about.

Paul, logical to a fault, walks them through the process in vv. 13-14. Through Jesus, God will bring with Him ( His return is implied ) those who have already died. In vv. 15-16 Paul gives some insight into this return – the fact that those who died will be resurrected prior to our Rapture. The Lord will descend with a. ) a cry of command; b. ) with the voice of an archangel; c. ) the sound of the trumpet of God; and d. ) in v. 17 ( key verse ) we who are alive and remain will be caught up ( Greek – *harpazō* = violently seized or snatched ) together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. This is meant to be an encouragement to the Thessalonians. ⑪

I Thess. 4:17 is a key verse because of where it says we meet the Lord – in the air. This is not Christ’s return as depicted in Zech. 14:4-5; Jude 14-15 or Rev. 19, unless we are meeting Him as He descends to the Mount of Olives, which really makes no sense and would provide little encouragement because it would necessitate the believer somehow surviving for the 7 years of tribulation in order to be changed in the twinkling of an eye, pop into the sky, meet Christ on His way down, and then immediately return to earth to reign with Christ on earth. We also know that when the Millennial Kingdom starts, there will be live Christians who enter the Kingdom in unglorified bodies. Why did they not get changed yet if the 2 events occur simultaneously? These are 2 separate events being depicted. One is the Rapture which only Christians alive at that time will experience, and the other is Christ’s Parousia, at which point every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him.

Further to that, John MacArthur, in his commentary on Matthew says the following: *“Had the early church been expecting to endure the Tribulation rather than enjoy the rapture, they would have rejoiced that their loved ones had already escaped that horrible trial. But they were obviously looking forward to something joyous, which they thought their departed loved ones & friends would not experience. They were not looking forward to the Antichrist but for the glory of the rapture. They were not looking for the terror of the Antichrist’s appearing but for the blessed hope of Christ’s appearing.”*<sup>ix</sup>

## II Thessalonians 2:1-12

While not picturing the Rapture per se, this passage is related to it. The church was concerned that the Day of the Lord may have already come, and they had missed it. Paul now goes into some prophetic detail to show them that there are signs that will be readable which will precede Christ's final return. These are not signs for the Rapture, but there are verses here which refer to the Rapture in an oblique sense.

First of all – signs that precede Christ's Second Coming are: v. 3 ) a rebellion; v. 3 ) the man of lawlessness is revealed / the son of destruction; v. 4 ) this man will oppose God and exalt himself over God, even taking a seat in God's Temple & proclaiming that he is God. This will be an obvious, unmistakable event – cf. Dan. 7:24-25.

Something was restraining this revealing of the Antichrist ( v. 6 ), and Paul says that they know what it is ( v. 5 ). Verse 7 provides the key and a reference to the Rapture. Lawlessness is already at work in the world, and it is rampant evil, but it is being ( even now ) being held back from achieving its' full potential by something or someone. Paul says that “He who now restrains it will do so until He is out of the way”. The “He” is undoubtedly the Holy Spirit who indwells believers.

But what does it mean that “He is out of the way.”? ( KJV – “He is taken out of the way” ). In the context, it has some relationship to the “mystery of lawlessness already at work”, because the 2 phrases are connected by the word “until” which is a necessary precondition. “Until” is pointing to some period in time when the restraining of evil going on at that time will be removed, and the implication is that the evil will increase as a result and the “lawless one” will be revealed. Verse 9 tells us that the coming of this lawless one will be “by the activity of Satan with all power & false signs & wonders.”<sup>12</sup> Were it not for v. 8 and the promise that Jesus will kill this lawless one with the breath of His mouth ( cf. Rev. 19:20-21 ), we would be worried that this ceasing of controlling or restraining of evil had ended permanently.

This removal of He who restrains cannot mean the complete removal of the Holy Spirit from the world for at least 2 reasons: 1. ) He is God so He is omnipresent; and 2. ) if He were gone completely, no one could be saved during the Tribulation period because He is the One who gives life. If this removal of restraint occurs just prior to the Tribulation period ( which makes all kinds of sense ), then we have a picture of how the depravity of man reacts when restraints against evil are pulled back. The reactions of people to the obvious wrath of God in Rev. 6-19 is astounding and completely supports this passage in II Thessalonians. Rather than repent, man instead curses God and rebels even more.

So if the complete removal of the Holy Spirit is not what Paul is depicting, then it has to be the removal of the church from the world which is in sight. The church does act as a restraining influence against evil in the world today – one need only look at the current media bias against the church regarding positions on abortion, homosexual rights, capital punishment, unjust court systems, the downward slide of morality & ethics, etc. to see that human beings hate the church because it calls them to accountability for their evil deeds. If the church is removed, then the influence of the church which is indwelt by the Holy Spirit can no longer bring guilt to bear on people and it will be as if the wicked are without restraint finally. It recalls verses such as Rom. 1:18, 24,26, 28 – “God gave them over” to their sin. Notice what Paul says in **II Thess. 2:10-12!**

What will the world look like with all restraints of morality removed? No righteousness, no holiness, no ethics, no morals, no looking out for others – in other words, the world wants Darwin, it will get Darwin & the survival of the fittest. It is described for us in Revelation and we do not want to experience it and we don't want our loved ones to go through it either. It is my contention that these 3 verses here are describing that it is the removal of the church from the world that creates the worldwide crisis which sets in motion the events of the Tribulation period.

Notice the very important vv. 10-12 here. There will be wicked deception occurring for those who are perishing, *“because they refused to love the truth and so be saved”*. Then, *“Therefore God sends them a strong delusion that they may believe what is false (KJV – “the lie”) in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”* What is it that God is sending them delusion to believe? I believe it is the lie that the Antichrist will spin to explain the reason that millions (if not billions) of people are suddenly missing from the earth in a split second. Imagine the chaos that will erupt when this occurs – car crashes, plane crashes, loved one disappearing in mid-sentence...how will the world leader explain that? These verses tell us that it will be a wicked lie, and that God will ensure that it is believed – for His purposes.

Judgment is on the horizon for a wicked world. Way back in Gen. 6:3, God said that His Spirit would not always strive with man, and that statement preceded the flood. Now, we are drawing closer and closer to the final judgment and the same sort of thing is happening as a sin crazed humanity's fate is about to be sealed. God is ensuring here that they are righteously condemned and will not escape His judgment. Cf. II Cor. 4:3-4; Isa. 6:9-10; Rom. 9:22-23. It would not make any sense for Christians to have to experience God's wrath during this time dedicated to wrathful judgment of the wicked (Rom. 8:1) because His wrath is no longer on believers. This passage provides strong support for the Rapture because it captures the necessary elements of Satanic deception and the apex of wickedness (by removing God's current restraints) & the sovereign hand of God withholding His common grace to seal the fate of those whom He has chosen to judge for their sin apart from Christ. ⑬

### Revelation 3:10

This is a verse hotly disputed between Dispensationalists & Covenant Theologians. The arguments can become technical and complicated, delving into the Greek and referencing other similarly worded passages (ie. “kept from”, “kept out of”, etc.). The dispute boils down to this: “I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth” means either:

1. ) the church being preserved in the midst of that time period, although they will be present in it (which is the A-Mil / Covenant interpretation) OR
2. ) the church will be removed from the midst of this time period completely (the Dispensational view)

The latter is the most natural way to understand what Jesus is saying here, especially the clause, “kept from the hour”. It is implied that this ‘keeping’ will coincide with the return of Christ mentioned in the next verse – v. 11. If believers meet the Lord in the air prior to the Tribulation, this verse makes sense. If the church lives through the Tribulation where people are being martyred regularly for their (new) faith, this verse makes no sense and the promise becomes tainted. Does this mean that only the church at

Philadelphia ( who receives this promise ) will escape as other churches undergo tremendous and deadly persecution? Not likely. The reward expected by the recipients of this promise would not include tribulation on a scale never before seen in history occurring next to them while they escape unscathed.

Having said this, it is also obvious that this particular church is long gone – the generation who received the letter has been dead for many hundreds of years. The promise is not a local or regional one, but has worldwide scope, just as it reads. This promise makes sense as long as we hold to our hermeneutic regarding what these 7 churches represent – not a historical progression of churches up to modern times, but rather a representative compendium of all churches in any age.

Therefore, any church generation who happens to be alive when the events leading up to the Tribulation period occur, even if that is still 1,000 years in our future, will receive the benefits of this promise as long as they are faithful ( ie. True believers ). By the same token, the promises to the other 6 churches – good or bad ones – can be expected to come to the church in the same regard. These 7 churches are representative churches and the commands, rebukes, promises and challenges are representative too, not limited to just those local assemblies in that time period.

### **Revelation 4:1**

This verse is sometimes used as a proof text for the Rapture, but I do not believe that this is a legitimate application of this verse. Some see it that way since it follows the last verse to mention the church for 15 chapters, and suddenly John is being called to “come up here” to heaven through an open door he is shown. People see John as somehow a representative or type of the church here and thus, this verse as a type or prophecy of our call to be raptured. I guess there is a possibility that this could be seen as a type, with John representing the church, but I don’t think it’s a very strong argument.

I believe this is merely a change of scenes. The 7 letters have come to an end and John is brought to the next stage of the vision he is being given by Christ. Even though a trumpet is mentioned here, it is not an actual trumpet, but a voice “like a trumpet” – cf. rev. 1:10 – the voice of Christ commanding John to come up to the third heaven through this visibly open door.

It is unfortunate that there is so much sensationalism associated with the doctrine of the Rapture which compels many end times writers and speakers to grab hold of any verse, regardless of its’ context and make it somehow fit into the Rapture treasure chest. They read into the text ( eisegete ) & use that to develop a theology which seems plausible & seems to support the argument, but alarmingly, it does just the opposite, as it takes away from scholarly efforts to exegete these texts & in many cases forces conservative theologians to distance themselves from any idea of a Rapture so they won’t be associated with “Headline Theology”. This is the case for instance when Hal Lindsey postulated that the fire and sulfur spewing from the mouths of horses in Rev. 9:17-19 were missiles being fired from attack helicopters in one of his early ( 1970’s ) books about the end times<sup>x</sup>; or that fire raining from the sky is depicting ICBM’s; or that the locusts are really Cobra attack helicopters and the sting from their tails is some sort of nerve gas.

There are good books on the Rapture, but there are also many which rely on sensationalism rather than biblical facts, appealing to the nature of humanity to be insatiably curious about the end times & the future in general.

### Genesis 5:21-24

This passage is the last one we'll look at in depth and I believe it does have a legitimate role to play in understanding the Rapture because I believe it is presenting it in type. It is often overlooked but it does contribute to the discussion.

In the Bible, only 2 global temporal judgments are mentioned – the Flood in Gen. 6-9, which is already past and the 7 year Tribulation which precedes the Great White Throne Judgment. Prophecies are legitimate components of Bible truth and are extremely important indicators of the veracity of the Bible itself as well as demonstrating God's omniscience with regard to the future. Typology, although not as solidly respected as prophecy due to the tendency of some to spiritualize the text by seeing types where they were never meant to be, has a legitimate place in Bible hermeneutics when the context calls for it. In this passage in Genesis, there is warrant to see this as a type.

Here we have a faithful believer, Enoch ( see also Jude 14-16; Heb. 11:5-6 ), who is said to “walk with God”. At age 65, he fathered Methusaleh, who lived longer than any recorded human being – 969. Methusaleh's name means “when he is dead, it will come”, and he died just prior to Noah's flood. Enoch lived 375 years on earth, and then an odd, unique statement is made about him in v. 24 – “Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.” In every other case in the lists of lives in Genesis ( or elsewhere in the OT ), it is said that such and such lived to such and such an age and then “he died”. It does not say this of Enoch. ⑮

The only other person in the Bible who is said to have been taken to heaven ( to stay ) without dying is Elijah ( II Kings 2:1-14 ). Enoch, however, is removed from the earth before the flood comes ( well before in fact ) and thus becomes almost by default, a type of the Rapture. Noah & 7 others will be saved by being in an ark for the duration of the flood, but Enoch is taken away prior to the judgment being poured out on the wickedness of the world.

Another bible account of a believer escaping God's judgment falling on the wicked is the account of Lot and his physical salvation from the destruction of Sodom & Gomorrah found in Gen. 18-19. This too could very well be a type of the Rapture.

Hopefully, I have given you at least some places to go to in Scripture to defend a pre-Tribulation Rapture position. Unfortunately, there are many scholarly adversaries within the church who do not see the Rapture in the pages of the bible, and those from that camp are simply more numerous than those who believe in the Rapture. I find it an oddity that it is mostly Calvinists who take a default “no rapture” position, while Arminians seem to be the majority in belief in the Rapture. Those who are the most careful to give God all the glory when it comes to our salvation, do not seem willing to accept the biblical evidence I have presented here ( plus more we did not look at). Much of this is wrapped up in their view of Israel & the church, and perhaps now you can see why it is a deficient view of Scripture to say that the Church has replaced Israel.

## Some Key Points to Consider Regarding a Pre-Tribulation Rapture

I have blended together some points from 2 authors / theologians in this section – Tim Lahaye<sup>xi</sup> ( the 1<sup>st</sup> 13 ) & John Walvoort<sup>xii</sup> ( the rest ).

1. ) The Pre-Trib view is the most logical view of some of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming passages when read literally. *“When taken literally, the prophetic passages of Scripture produce a pre-Millennial view of the Kingdom, a futuristic view of the Tribulation described in the book of Revelation, and a pre-Tribulation Rapture.”<sup>xiii</sup>*
2. ) The Pre-Trib Rapture clearly untangles the contrasting details of Christ’s 2<sup>nd</sup> coming.
3. ) The Pre-Trib Rapture allows sufficient time to interject important end – time events such as the Judgment Seat of Christ ( for believers – II Cor. 5:10; I Cor. 3:12-15 ), and the Marriage Supper of the Lamb ( Rev. 19:1-9 ).
4. ) This is the only view that distinguishes between Israel & the Church. Israel is the focus of the Tribulation while the church is absent.
5. ) Only this view makes the blessed hope truly a blessed hope. It was given to the Thessalonians, those who were mourning, as comfort. It would not be comforting to know you were facing galactic and global catastrophes.
6. ) This is the only view that takes God at His word and claims His promises literally to save us from the wrath to come – Rev. 3:10; I Thess. 1:10; 5:9; Rom. 5:9.
7. ) Only this view preserves the motivating power of imminence teaching found in the NT that was such a challenge to the early church. 16
8. ) Pre-Trib Christians are looking for the coming of the Lord, not the Antichrist, Tribulation and suffering.
9. ) It makes the Rapture a major event. There are 4 passages associated with it along with many smaller references and inferences, plus typological evidence for it. It makes this an event commensurate with a Bridegroom coming for His bride to take her back to His Father’s house for the ceremony.
10. ) This view most clearly fits the flow of the book of Revelation. Rev. 19:11-20 describes the glorious appearing of Christ to the entire world. There is no hint there of the resurrection of the church so the Bride can join her Lord as promised, and this passage assumes they are already all in heaven. According to the Pre-Trib view, they have been there for 7 years.
11. ) The Pre-Trib view maintains I Thess. 4:13-18 as a comfort passage and explains why the young believers were so upset by the death of their loved ones.
  - a. There is no indication of impending tribulation
  - b. They are grieving over loved ones who died and whom they felt would now miss the return of Christ
  - c. There is no grief over an anticipated major trial or tribulation
  - d. I Thess. 4 is compatible with the Pre-Trib view.
12. ) The Pre-Trib view explains why the church is not mentioned on earth in Rev. 4-18.

13. ) It explains why there is no Bible instruction on preparation for the Tribulation. The exhortations of the major passage – I Cor. 15:51-56 - are simple ones. There is not a word concerning a coming tribulation time but they are exhorted to live in light of Christ's knowledge of their labour in His behalf – I Cor. 15:58. IOW – He will be rewarding them for it.
14. ) Tribulation saints are not translated at the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ but carry on ordinary occupations like farming, building houses and bearing children ( Isa. 65:20-25 ), which would be impossible if all saints were translated at the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ.
15. ) If the translation took place in connection with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming to earth of Christ, there would be no need of separating sheep from goats at a subsequent judgment – this separation would have taken place in the very act of translating the believers before Christ sets up His throne on earth. ( Matt. 25:31 )
16. ) The coming of Christ for His bride has to take place before the Parousia, and in fact, in Rev. 19:1-9, the Marriage Supper takes place before the Parousia ( Rev. 19:7-10 ).
17. ) At the Rapture, living saints are translated, while at the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming, no saints are translated.
18. ) At the Rapture, saints go to heaven, while at the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming, saints remain on the earth without translation to go into the Kingdom.
19. ) At the Rapture, saints meet Christ in the air, while at the Parousia, they accompany Christ to earth where He touches down on the Mt. of Olives.
20. ) The rapture is imminent, while the Parousia is preceded by definite signs. 17
21. ) No passage in either the OT or NT dealing with the resurrection of the saints at the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming ever mentions translation of living saints at the same time.

### Questions for Discussion

- Who can be saved during the rapture? Only those who never heard about Christ ( David Jeremiah's position ) or anyone who hears and responds?
- Will only faithful believers be Raptured or all believers?
- What about babies at the Rapture? Since they are ( in my estimation<sup>xiv</sup> ) part of the Elect, will babies also be raptured?
- Does the Temple have to be rebuilt on the Dome of the Rock before the events of the Tribulation can take place? Some say "yes".

See footnotes on next page.

Next lesson – Rev. 4:1-6a – The Throne in Heaven

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<sup>i</sup> Jack Van Impe

<sup>ii</sup> John Hagee

<sup>iii</sup> Tim Lahaye, Jerry Jenkins, Hal Lindsey, Grant R. Jeffrey, Randal Price, Mark Hitchcock, Thomas Ice, John Walvoort, Dwight Pentacost, etc.

<sup>iv</sup> This outline is based on John MacArthur's 3 sermons "Will the Church Go Through the Tribulation?" – June / July 1973 – accessible at [www.gtyresources.org](http://www.gtyresources.org)

<sup>v</sup> John MacArthur – from sermon entitled, "Will the Church Go Through the Tribulation Part 3" – July 1973

<sup>vi</sup> This event is so important that it is recorded by every gospel writer – Matt. 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; JN 12:12-19

<sup>vii</sup> Sir Robert Anderson; *The Coming Prince*; Kregel; 1957; reprint 1980; pp. 119ff. His calculations are recorded on p. 128.

<sup>viii</sup> Harry A. Ironside; *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*; Loizeaux Brothers; 1938 ( reprint 1981 ); pp. 529-530.

<sup>ix</sup> John MacArthur; *Matthew 24-28*; Moody; 1989; p. 67

<sup>x</sup> Hal Lindsey wrote a number of end times books that were sensational in nature, and really started a trend of books which took license with Scripture and brought in numerous way out ideas of what some of the things going on in Revelation may have been symbolic of. Here is a list of some of his books: "Satan is Alive & Well"; "The Late, Great Planet Earth"; "There's a New World Coming"; "The Rapture-Truth or Consequences?"; "Countdown to Armageddon"; "The Final Battle".

<sup>xi</sup> Tim Lahaye; *Rapture Under Attack*; Multnomah; 1998; pp. 209-216

<sup>xii</sup> John F. Walvoort; *The Rapture Question*; Dunham Publishing Co.; 1957 – reprint 1964; pp. 192-199.

<sup>xiii</sup> Tim Lahaye, *IBID*; p. 210

<sup>xiv</sup> See my study on the Doctrine of Hell – 2009 – section entitled, "What About Infants Who Die?" for a detailed defense of this position.