

The Comings of Jesus

Revelation 19:11 / 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

¹¹ Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. Revelation 19:11

Revelation 19:11 Brings us to the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ.

A) We will look at that when we jump back into our Revelation Study in September

B) What a lot of people don't realize is that the Bible teaches - 3 comings of Jesus

C) 1st - a baby - the incarnation - comes as a lamb

D) 2nd coming Revelation 19:1 He comes as a King - the lion of the tribe of Judah - conquering one

E) In between those two comings is this time when Jesus comes not to the earth - but to the clouds

1) The Rapture of the church

Throughout our study in the book of Revelation we have made references to the rapture.

A) And why I believe it will happen before the tribulation starts.

B) Some Bible teachers don't believe it is a biblical idea at all. - No such thing as a rapture

C) Those who do believe in a rapture debate when it will occur - Post Trib, - at 2nd coming - Reverse Bunge

D) Mid-Trib / Pre-Wrath - Pre-Trib

Today we are going to talk about the rapture - what it is

A) Why it is a Biblical concept

B) Finish by giving you 5-6 reasons why I believe it will happen before the Tribulation starts

Where does the word rapture originate?

A) 1 Thessalonians 4

¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with

the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

B) V.17 "Caught up" - Greek word Harpazo = to be snatched away.

The Latin form of the Greek word Harpazo is rapturus

C) from which we get our English word - RAPTURE.

D) It speaks of a time when a person who is alive is taken into Heaven

E) Examples: Enoch, Elijah, Revelation 11 - the two witnesses.

What Paul is describing there in 1 Thessalonians 4 is when the whole church - is taken

A) Where else is the rapture described in the Bible.

B) Two clear places - although there are others that are not as clear.

John 14:1-3 Set the scene - LAST NIGHT - upper room tough words - Leaving - Betray forsake Peter Deny..... Love You

"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. John 14:1-3

Notice a few things here: Jesus says - I am going to my father's house to prepare a place = Heaven

A) that is where Jesus ascended to and remains - Preparing for us } 2,000 yrs

B) But then Jesus says - I will come again to receive you to myself that where I am, there you may be also.

C) Note that Jesus doesn't say - I will come again and set up my kingdom here on earth - NO! that's the 2ND COMING

D)I WILL COME AGAIN – TO TAKE YOU TO this place that I have been preparing for you!

E)Jesus is clearly talking about coming to take them to Heaven.

1 Corinthians 15:51-53

51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed – {Nursery room slogan}

52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

1 Corinthians 15:51-53

A)Describes a Change that takes place at the last trumpet – Rapture

B)In a moment in the twinkling of a eye – Metamorphosis – MAJOR TRANSFORMATION -

C)Caterpillar becomes a butterfly

D)That is what is going to happen to us – right now we are like the caterpillar crawling around
{ Complete transformation – Butterfly – NEW BODIES

E)So there shouldn't be any confusion – the rapture is a Biblical word and concept

1)The concept is seen directly in other passages in Scripture

Now despite these Clear passages there are those - who believe the idea of a rapture is made up.

A)They teach that the rapture was not a Biblical concept or anything the early church believed

B)It is an idea that came into being in 1820 from a preacher by the name of John Darby

C)Then was made popular in 1960-1970's by a pastor named Hal Lindsey - Late great plant earth..... thief in the night

Did the early church fathers believe in the rapture?

A)Absolutely

Consider what Ephraim the Syrian said in 373 AD...)

“Most dearly beloved believe the Holy Spirit who speaks in us – now we have spoken before because the end of the world is near, we ought to understand brothers what is imminent – that is, all saints and the elect of the Lord will be gathered together in the clouds before the tribulation which is about to come and are taken to the Lord in the sky in order that they may not see at any time the confusion in the world which overwhelms this world because of sin.” – Ephraim the Syrian AD 373 – taken from “The Book of the Cave Treasure” – Translated by Cameron Rhodes of Tyndale Theological Seminary

Even earlier Irenaeus of Lyon (120-202 AD).

Irenaeus was a pre-tribulationist

A)He was a disciple of Polycarp (who was a disciple of the apostle John)

Irenaeus is most-known for his 5-volume treatise, *Against Heresies* in which he exposed the false religions and cults of his day

And in Book 5 of his treatise - He wrote this:

“A coming time of difficulty and unrest on planet earth

“And therefore, when in the end the Church shall be suddenly caught up from this, and then “There shall be tribulation such as has not been since the beginning, neither shall be.- For this is the last contest of the righteous, in which, when they overcome they are crowned with incorruption.”

Irenaeus *Against Heresies* 5.29,

A Little later Cyprian was Pastor of the church in Carthage. (200 AD – 258 AD)

A)In *Treatises of Cyprian* he wrote in describing the end times Great Tribulation:

“We who see that terrible things have begun, and know that still more terrible things are imminent, may regard it as the greatest advantage to depart from it as quickly as possible. Do you not give God thanks, do you not congratulate yourself, that by an early departure you are taken away, and delivered from the shipwrecks and disasters that are imminent?”

Now Ephraim the Syrian Irenaeus and Cyprian were not alone, in their teaching on the rapture

A)These are some other men taught on the rapture of the church

B)Other Early Church leaders that taught the rapture

- The Shepherd of Hermas – 150 AD
- Victorinus – the Bishop of Gatow – 270 AD
- Ephraim the Syrian – 373 AD
- Jerome in the Latin Vulgate – 400 AD

Now it is true that during the middle ages the rapture wasn't taught

A)but nothing was really taught during that dark time in church history

B)But then the reformation came and the teaching concerning the rapture of the church continued

- Reverend Dolacento – 1600
- Joseph Matty – 1627
- Increase Matther – 1627
- Peter Jarue – 1687
- John AsGil – 1700
- John Gil – 1748
- James McKnight – 1763
- Morgan Edwards – 1744
- Thomas Scott – 1792
- John Darby – 1820

My Point - John Darby didn't start this thing –

A)John Darby is in a long line of guys who believed the rapture to be true

B)So the rapture of the church, a time when a future generation of Christians will not die,

1)but be taken in a moment into heaven, given new bodies and live forever after with the Lord

C)The early church believed in the imminent return of Jesus for his church

D)One of the things that made them so powerful - they believed Jesus could come at any moment!

E)Ready, watching and Busy for the kingdom!

Now the interesting thing about the rapture is that for those who do believe it is Biblical

A)There is a wide range of opinions on when it happens - Solid Bible teachers - disagree

B)Some believe - it happens at the end of the Tribulation - Post Tribers

C)Some who believe that it happens in the middle of the Tribulation - Mid Tribers

D)Others - Pre-wrath view - Happens in Revelation 14 before the Bowl judgments

Then you have the Pre-Trib view - it happens before the Tribulation starts.

A)That is the view that we hold here at Calvary Vista and it is the view of Calvary Chapel in general

B)It is the most popular evangelical view concerning the rapture.

C)I want to finish our study today by giving you 5-6 reasons why I believe the Bible clearly teaches that the rapture will happen before the tribulation

Reason #1 - We are not appointed unto wrath!

A)In 1 Thes. 5 Paul continues discussing this theme of the Rapture of the Church – no chapter breaks

But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. 2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.

B)Noted that the Day of the Lord is not a Day - time period - begins with the rapture -- trib - 2nd coming
1)And ends with the end of the Millennium

C)That whole time period is known as the Day of the Lord. - Jewish readers knew this - OT prophets

V.3 - Paul gives us insight into when it is going to happen.

3 For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. 4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief.

Jesus comes as a Thief in the night to an unbelieving World - catches them off guard - NOT US

5 You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. 6 Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. 8 But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.

Paul is exhorting the church - that the way to not be caught off guard is to stay engaged in the fight

A) We are waiting and watching - Armor on - we are aware of the signs - the times and seasons

B) Then he says this:

9 For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. 11 Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

C) Now here was it interesting - every view agrees with Paul's statement - not appointed unto wrath

The Post tribers believe that somehow the church is protected during the trib

A) They have to do a real twisting of the scriptures to try and make the Church the 144k - Rev 7 & 9

B) The Mid tribers - and Pre-wrath groups believe the wrath of God - isn't poured out until 2nd part

C) But the point I have been arguing is this: I think it is very clear - that the tribulation starts in Revelation Chapter 6

The Seal Judgments - Jesus is opening the Seven seals - Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, "Come and see - Revelation 6:1

V.3 When he opened the second seal

V.5 When he opened the third seal

V.7 When he opened the 4th seal - 1/4 of the earth's population is killed

V.9 When he opened the 5th seal

V.12 When he opened the 6th seal

Ch. 8:1 When he opened the 7th seal

Seal Judgments for a reason

The 7th seal being opened unleashes what is known as the trumpet Judgments

A) 7 Angels standing before God are handed trumpets- and are sent out to blow their trumpets

B) And each trumpet is another form of Judgment

C) Everything is happening on planet earth is originating from heaven -

1) From the hand of Jesus

Just like we have seen in other parts of Scripture - God's wrath and judgment in OT

A) He would allow nations to judge Israel

B) He allows Satan, the Demons, and the Anti-Christ to wreak havoc on the earth.

C) All a part of his wrath being poured out.

1) but Paul said - we are not appointed unto wrath

D) So the Church his bride is taken out before that all begins

Now why hasn't He appointed us to wrath?

A) The wrath we deserve was paid for at Calvary!

B) It was poured out on Jesus absorbed by Jesus!

C) If we go through any part of the Tribulation we are enduring part of the Wrath of God .

Reason #2 The Message in 1 Thess. 4:18 and 5:11 - "Comfort one another w/ these words"

A) In Ch.4 Paul is talking about the rapture - how we are going to be caught up to meet the Lord

B) He ends that thought w/ this Exhortation 18 *Therefore comfort one another with these words.*

C) Then again in Chapter 5- He is talking about the Day of the Lord

D) A time that his readers knew - was a time when God would pour out his wrath

E) Then Paul says - but remember - not you - you are not appointed unto wrath

1) Then he ends that section again - with the words 11 Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

See this is a Key thing / This Teaching is to comfort us - not freak us out!

A) Comfort here means - Be encouraged by !

B) Now if the rapture is at the end or in the middle of the tribulation that is not very comforting

C)By the time we get to the 6th trumpet - upwards of 4 billion people have been killed

Listen if we are going to experience any part of the Seal judgments - trumpet judgments

A)My message to you would be - get ready to suffer and probably die for your faith

B)Now if we did go thru part - I believe that Jesus will help you but is still going to be really hard

C)Unlike any form of persecution the world has seen up to this point.

D)Paul's message would not have been comfort - but gear up get ready to DIE!

Some argue- well Christians have been persecuted all around the world for centuries - even now - countries

A)Why shouldn't we suffer.

B)You are right - we are blessed to live in a country where there is freedom.

C)In many ways it doesn't seem fair -

But don't just look through the lens of a Christian living here in the USA

A)Think about Christians in N Korea - Iran - China

B)Over 5,000 Christians were killed for their faith last year around the world -

C)If the church goes through any part of the Tribulation - here is what we are saying

1)To our bros/sisters in those countries

D)You think you have it bad now - it is going to get a whole lot worse

1)Not very comforting

E)Paul says - this teaching is to comfort us!

1)There is No Comfort in the message : Bear up / get Ready TO DIE - / SURVIVAL

REASON #3 The Tribulation Is Known as the Time of Jacobs Trouble Jeremiah 30:7 -

A)Purpose of that time is To Wake up Israel -

B)Called time of Jacob's -trouble - not the churches trouble

C)In ROM 9-11 - God not through with Israel - time coming Jews will be saved some now!

1)A lot more during the Tribulation

D)So Tribulation is for a Christ rejecting world and for Israel- TO WAKE UP open eyes

Reason #4 We are to be Looking for the Coming of Jesus Christ.

“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, 12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.” Titus 2:11-13

A)So here in Titus we are instructed that we are to be looking for the coming of Jesus Christ

B)But those who embrace the mid & Post Trib. Or Pre-wrath views are not looking for Jesus appearing 1)but the appearing of Anti-Christ {Has to come first

C) LISTEN: Nowhere in scripture are we -told to be looking for Anti-Christ!

Now some would argue - Didn't Paul say that in 2 Thessalonians 2 - Anti-Christ comes first?

A)Well let's look at that - is that what he said

B)Turn to 2 Thessalonians 2 - That day - the day of the Lord -

Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, 2 not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come.

This was the problem - the church in Thessalonica was thinking they had missed the rapture -

A)And because of the persecution - they were encountering - they were already in the tribulation.

3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day rapture - Trib - 2nd coming for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, Anti-Christ 4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

C) See Pastor Rob - the Anti-Christ comes first! - So Revelation 6 when the anti-Christ comes - 1st seal
1) That can't be the beginning of the tribulation

Not so fast 3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first

A) The Falling away - describes a great apostasy - a time when many people would be turning from Jesus

B) Paul is saying - that will be the first thing to notice leading up to that time - Great Apostasy

C) Can anyone say: Deconstruction..... seeing that big time

And then Paul says: And the man of sin is revealed:
A) Paul is telling them - Before the Great Tribulation can be identified with certainty,

B) a particular person - known as the man of sin, - Anti-Christ must be revealed.

C) I think Paul's point is clear: "You are worried that we are in the Great Tribulation
1) and that you missed the rapture.

D) But you can know that we are *not* in the Great Tribulation,
1) because we have not yet seen the man of sin ... revealed."

E) He is not saying - we will see it - but that we would know this is the Trib - if he was here.

Think of it this way: Let's say your little son got all upset - someone told him - He missed Christmas
A) You could say - Son what do we see when we go to the store in October - Halloween Candy

B) Have we seen that yet - No - and what is the big family feast we have in November ?
1) Thanksgiving - have we had that yet

C) You didn't miss Christmas

That is Paul's point

A) There is another idea that is interesting - notice v.3 Paul says THE FALLING AWAY - not Aaway!

B) He seems to be talking about something specific -

Kenneth Wuest - and E Schuler two of the most Respected Greek and Hebrew Scholars today
A) They translate the phrase falling away as departing from an area geographically-

B) For that reason Wuest argues - very passionately & persuasively that this is speaking of the Rapture of the Church

1) The Day of the Lord cannot begin - unless the Falling away - the rapture of the Church happens first

C) I think either view supports - that Paul was not teaching the Anti-Christ comes first

1) Not looking for Anti-Christ JESUS Christ

Reason #5 The types or Typology in the OT.

A) Luke 17:26 Like the Days of Noah.....

B) In the story of Noah we have a beautiful picture of what will take place in last days

C) At the time of Noah God was judging the earth w/ the flood .

1) God's wrath is being poured out on wicked mankind! Gen. 6

Now during the flood the Lord protects Noah & his family in the ark -

A) They are a type of that select group from the nation of Israel -

B) Who God is going to protect during the time of the trib.

C) Ok where is the church in this picture ?

1) Gen. Ch. 5 the church is seen in the person of Enoch

D) Told of *Enoch walked w/ God & he pleased God - and one day He was nottook Him ! Rapture!*

E) Enoch is a type of the church taken out before judgment begins!

2nd Type look at found in Gen. 18,19 Story of Lot!

A) Again in Luke 17:28 Jesus said it would be like the times of Lot

B) Lot was living in Sodom and Gomorrah - two cities that were rampant with sin and wickedness

1) Including extreme Homosexuality

C) These cities were so wicked - that there wasn't 10 righteous people there. - THAT IS BAD

D) The Cancer of those two cities was growing and spreading - God had to destroy it

But before the cities were destroyed by God - he gets his servant Lot and his two daughters out

A) Lot was spared – He was led out along with his daughters

B) Lot & His daughters are a picture of the church that is not preserved through the judgment

C) But are taken out - removed before the judgment can begin!

D) So we have these types in the OT

So we have the Diff. types in the Bible that also pt. to the fact that the Rapt. will take place before the Trib.

A) God taking out Enoch, Lot, Dan. (The Church) Before the judgment begins

Reason # 6 The Jewish wedding Ceremony

A) Beautiful picture In Jewish culture marriages were most often Arranged (EXPLAIN)

B) Now when the Kids came of age where they could actually be married –

1) one thing that needed to take place first was home prepared

C) So the boy - bridegroom would begin to build a dwelling place for he and his bride

1) the wedding couldn't take place until it was finished!

D) Now Who determined when it was finished? - His Father

This is so great in comparison to our situation

A) John 14 - Jesus says - *going to heaven prepare a place for you - my bride* - (betrothed to the Lord)

B) He said - *I will come again and receive you to myself*

1) but also says - *no man knows the day or the hour of that coming except - Father!*

C) But Jesus said - *we should know the times and seasons - understand when things are getting closer!*

So the bridegroom would be working on the house

A) And the bride would get reports from friends – relatives

B) Walls are up / roof is on / windows in / front door is up/ it could be any day now! - finished

C) Nothing left that needed to happen

Now Over the years it became the custom of the bridegroom to surprise his bride

A) In the middle of the night - early morning

B) He and his groomsmen come into town to her house making a lot of noise!

1) A wedding today

C) The Bride and the bridesmaids needed to be ready - oil in lamps - dresses etc

D) Matt 25 Parable of the ten virgins is about – 5 ready 5 who were not ready

Bridegroom and bride would then go to this house he prepared - stay 7 days!

A) family and friends - party - celebrate - at the end of the 7 days - bride would be presented!

Incredible picture of what the bible teaches of Christ and His church

1. Betrothed to Him
2. Gone to prepare a place
3. No one know day or hour except Father
4. Bride gets reports - we know times and seasons
5. Bridegroom comes - wedding feast - and at the end of the feast the Bride is presented

1) We are presented at 2nd coming

So there you have 6 Reasons why I believe the Bible Clearly teaches that the Rapture will take place – before the Tribulation

A) Nothing preventing this from happening –

B) the world gets more and more like the days of Noah & Lot everyday

C) SO Why does the Lord wait?

2 Peter 3:8-9

8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

D)Waiting for you – today is the day of Salvation

The Devil wants you to think otherwise !

William Barclay - fictional story - meeting Satan held w/ demons where trying to figure out how to trick people into eternal damnation

A)1st demon: *"There is no God"* - no Satan said - *creation declares the reality of God.*

B)*People too smart to deny His existence*
A few idiots might get sucked in but not the masses

B)2nd demon: "No Hell". No said Satan - *"People understand there needs to be retribution and judgment - people won't buy that*

C)3rd demon: "Instead of saying no God or no hell - no hurry!

1)Satan responded that is it! no hurry! Spread the word

D)Sad but true many have lost their sense of urgency but the cry will soon come.