

THE POST-TRIBULATION RESURRECTION-RAPTURE

Relatively few scholars dispute that the Rapture is a Biblical teaching. The Bible clearly speaks of a future event known as the *resurrection of the dead* whereby the bodies of all believers who have died will be raised from their graves and given new glorified bodies. When this happens, many believers will still be alive. The Rapture is simply the idea that living saints are *caught up*¹ soon after the dead in Christ are raised. When the appointed time comes for the resurrection of the saints, it is not necessary that the Lord first kill all living saints in order to soon resurrect them.

Thus, the dead in Christ are said to be *raised* whereas the living in Christ are said to be *raptured*, although the living are raised as well.

CLARIFICATION OF DEFINITIONS

In this paper, I differentiate certain terms to hopefully remain Biblical and to clarify issues.

Throughout history, many have been raised from the dead and continue to do so to this day. Some have even been embalmed, so these are not mere “near death” experiences. One might read Craig Keener's book on *Miracles*, at some 1200 heavily-documented pages, to discover this. All who are have been raised are not yet glorified or resurrected. In fact, apart from Jesus Christ, all who have been raised, are not yet resurrected. Those who have been raised have died again or may soon do so. They have not yet been raised “incorruptible”.

Certain Greek words translate into but one English word. Many are aware that there are several Greek words that translate to the English “love”. This would include the words “agape” (Strong's #25) and “phileo” (Strong's #5368) as seen in John 21:15-17. To fully understand this passage, one must consult the Greek text. A less-known example of this is the word English “then” being translated as such from several Greek words, including “tote” (Strong's #5119) which means “concurrently” or at the same time as, and “epeita” (Strong's #1899) which means “thereafter” as in a sequence of events.

Observing these elements, it should be discernible that firstly, the tares and wheat grow together until the tares are gathered for destruction, then the dead in Christ are raised (but not yet resurrected), then the Rapture of the living follows, then and later on the same day both the living and dead are “changed” in one moment or one twinkling of the eye into a glorified state (this is the “resurrection”).

THE RESURRECTION-RAPTURE DAY

Paul declares the mystery, “We shall not all sleep.” All saints, whether living or sleeping, are “changed, in a [one] moment” in time.² This is why many refer to the day as the Resurrection-Rapture. Yet, only the Resurrection takes place in one moment, not necessarily the rapture.

1 1Th 4:17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be **caught up** together with them in the clouds . . .

2 1Co 15:51-52 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment

Jesus brings those who sleep in him (the dead in Christ) with him at his coming,³ having first raised their bodies.⁴ Then those who are alive and remain are caught up together with them in the clouds.⁵ At the Second Coming, the dead in Christ are gathered from heaven (having been with him in paradise⁶), while the living saints are gathered from the earth.⁷ So, contrary to popular teaching, the living are not first taken in the Rapture before the dead are raised (up to seven years later). The bodies of the dead are clearly raised first.

What exactly happens when all the saints, living and dead, are “changed” in the Resurrection in one moment? The corruptible (mortal) put on incorruption (immortality), and Death is conquered.⁸

RAISED AT THE LAST DAY

When does the Resurrection-Rapture happen? Jesus declares four times in John 6 that it occurs "at the last day".⁹ It should be noted that all who have eternal life are raised at the last day. This would include every saint in history, whether living or dead, from both before and during the Tribulation. Jesus also confirms Martha's declaration that the resurrection occurs "at the last day".¹⁰ In other words, the raising of the dead (possibly beginning with God's Two Witnesses), the Rapture, and their final Resurrection all occur within this one day of which Jesus speaks as the “last”.

It should be obvious that the last day of which Jesus speaks does not occur seven years (or any other span) *before* the last day. Jesus is not the author of confusion.

RAISED AND REWARDED AT THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET

One of the events of the last day is that a trumpet, known as the last trumpet, is sounded and this sounding is clearly accompanied by the Resurrection when all saints are changed.¹¹ With

3 1Th 4:14 . . . them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

4 1Th 4:16 . . .the dead in Christ shall rise first . . .

5 1Th 4:17 . . . then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds

6 Luke 23:43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

7 Mar 13:26-27 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven. Also, Eph 1:10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:

8 1Co 15:52-54 The dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory (Isa 25:8).

9 John 6:39-40 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should **raise it up again at the last day**. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and **I will raise him up at the last day**. Also, John 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and **I will raise him up at the last day**. Also, John 6:54 Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and **I will raise him up at the last day**.

10 John 11:24-26 Martha saith unto him, I know that he [Lazarus] **shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day**. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

11 1Co 15:52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at **the last trump**: for the **trumpet** shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

this trumpet, the Lord descends with a shout and the voice of the archangel.¹² Jesus tied this trumpet to his Second Coming "in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" when his elect are gathered.¹³

This final trumpet, the seventh trumpet of Revelation, signals the judgment time of the dead when believers are given their *reward*.¹⁴ Part of the reward of the saints is that their corruptible mortal bodies are granted incorruption and immortality as noted above. Jesus also confirms that his Second Coming in glory also brings judgment and reward.¹⁵

This alone proves that Paul's "last trump" of 1 Corinthians 15:52 is in fact the final trumpet sounded by John's "seventh angel" in Revelation 11:15. Some have conjectured that some 40 years lapsed between the writings of the two authors; thus, an overlapping context may be dubious. But, the single event of the rewarding of the saints unifies the passages.

THE FIRST RESURRECTION

Of course, Jesus was the first to be resurrected, Christ being the firstfruits, then his saints are resurrected at his Second Coming.¹⁶ The Resurrection-Rapture *of the saints* is known as the "first" resurrection and it includes the judgment of all saints as noted previously, including those who have endured the Tribulation and not worshipped the beast, nor his image, nor received his mark.¹⁷ Here the saints are rewarded as reigning priests for a thousand years.¹⁸ Again, these events are unique to the last day.

As this is clearly called the *first* resurrection of the saints, we should not tolerate the idea of any *previous* resurrection of the saints, even if only seven years earlier. The context indicates "first" as both first in time (when contrasted with the second or last resurrection 1000 years later) and as first in preference (when contrasted with the fact that the second or last resurrection include only "the rest of the dead" which are likely lost souls bound for the lake of fire). But, the dispute over how "first" is to be interpreted is rather pointless as we are referencing the Resurrection of the Just and Jesus declares in Luke 14:14 that there is only one "resurrection of the just".

Some have advanced the theory that the first resurrection occurs in two or more stages, one

12 1Th 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the **trump** of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

13 Matt 24:30-31 ... they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 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.

14 Rev 11:15, 18 And the seventh angel sounded . . . and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give **reward** unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great

15 Matt 16:27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall **reward** every man according to his works.

16 1Co 15:21, 23 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. . . But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's **at his coming**.

17 Rev 20:4-5 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. . . This is **the first resurrection**.

18 Rev 20:6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in **the first resurrection**: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

of which excluding the Tribulation saints, but there is not the slightest hint of such an idea in Scripture. Another related popular teaching is that the Day of the Lord is not a literal 24-hour day, but rather is a term used to cover a period of 7 or more years. Although there are Biblical passages where the term “day” does not signify 24 hours, a multi-staged first resurrection would require at least two moments of time, not the one singular moment mentioned in Corinthians.¹⁹ Perhaps we need to reiterate Jesus' promise that *everyone* who believes in the Son will be raised (or raptured, if living) on the last day.²⁰

SAINTS ARE NOT APPOINTED TO GOD'S WRATH

With the faithful having been promised that they are not appointed to wrath in 1 Thessalonians 5:9, it is generally agreed that the faithful have been raptured before God's wrath is poured out. Of course, since an all-powerful God has the ability to protect and preserve his saints in the midst of his wrath, the entire question is rather mundane. Because of the “thief” reiterated in Rev 16:15, I believe the final call to be raptured may be just before the final vial of wrath is poured out. But, in the next section, we determine exactly when, according to Scripture, God's wrath falls. His wrath is continual as evidenced throughout Scripture, so what is sought here is “When is the eschatological Day of his wrath to begin?”

THE 21 MAJOR EVENTS OF REVELATION AND THE WRATH OF GOD

Revelation teaches a chronologically ordinal (first, second, etc.) succession of 21 events that are experienced on earth in the last days: the breaking of 7 seals (6:1-17, 8:1-6), the sounding of 7 trumpets (8:7-9:21, 11:14-19), and the outpouring of 7 vials of wrath (15:6-16:21). These events may overlap and occur concurrently with other events. For example, while the locusts of the fifth trumpet are still afflicting men, the sixth trumpet may sound. But the beginning of each event is clearly denoted in a numerically ordinal succession. Let us examine these events to determine exactly when God's wrath is to commence.

The Seven Seals (6:1-17, 8:1-6)

The first four seals (6:1-8) are the familiar Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. Although they foretell of a conqueror, a warmonger, an economic crisis, and widespread death wiping out one fourth of humanity, they are not noted as associated with God's wrath. Rather they appear to be foreshadowing the foolishness of man.

The fifth seal (6:9-11) sees martyrs pleading for God to bring judgment on the wicked. Rather than God's wrath falling at this point, they are given white robes and told to “rest yet for a little season” until all fellow martyrs are likewise slain. Hence, we conclude that as long as martyrs are being slain, God's wrath is restrained.

Understanding the sixth seal (6:12-17) is quite complex, so it will be addressed separately under the heading, “The Sixth Seal” below. Contrary to popular belief, the wrath of God does

¹⁹ 1Co 15:51-52 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in **a moment**

²⁰ John 6:40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that **every one** which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up **at the last day**.

not begin here.

Chapter 7 is a parenthetical break from the narrative which mentions the sealing of the 144,000 remnant of Israel (7:1-8) and the great multitude in white robes (7:9-17).

The seventh seal (8:1-6) reveals seven angels preparing to sound the seven trumpets. Although we see fire cast to the earth, voices, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake, the wrath of God is not mentioned here.

The Seven Trumpets (8:7-9:21, 11:14-19)

The first four trumpets (8:7-12) are quite severe. All green grass is burned up and one-third of the following are afflicted or destroyed: trees, seas, sea life, ships, rivers, fountains of waters, the sun, the moon, the stars, day, and night. Yet, God's wrath is not mentioned. In fact, we are soon told at the seventh trumpet that the time has come to "destroy them which destroy the earth" (11:19), so perhaps these plagues are human- or demon-induced calamities.

The fifth trumpet (9:1-12), also known as the first woe, tells us of the locusts inspired by the the angel of the bottomless pit (named *Abaddon* or *Apollyon*) but not by God's wrath.

The sixth trumpet (9:13-21), also known as the second woe, tells us that four angels are loosed to lead an army of 200 million horsemen to slay one-third of the remainder of mankind. Remember that one-fourth of mankind has already been slain at the fourth seal (6:8), so earth's population has now been halved (three-fourths times two-thirds). It is not at all clear that these are heavenly angels. They may be demonic. In fact, rather than being sent by God, they are simply "loosed" and appear to go forth of their own volition much like the demonic locusts of the fifth trumpet. They kill by fire, smoke, and brimstone, having tails like unto serpents, indicating an origin that is perhaps more hellish than heavenly. Regardless of their origin, God's wrath is not declared here.

Next, we read another parenthetical break from the woes covering events that would not be considered woeful, but provide necessary details. The three woes are so called because they warn of worldwide pain and death. This milder parenthesis covers the seven thunders (10:1-7), the eating of the little book (10:8-11), the measuring of the Temple (11:1-2), and the ministry of the two witnesses (11:3-13).

The seventh trumpet (11:14-19), also known as the third woe, has already been expounded above. Here we clearly hear the testimony of the twenty-four elders that "thy [God's] wrath is come" (11:18). This is the first clear indication that God is (present tense) unleashing his wrath.

Next, we see another parenthetical break from the chronological sequence that spans over three chapters. At 11:19, the temple in heaven is opened. It is again seen open in 15:5. Does God close the temple and re-open it? No. Rather, verses 12:1 to 15:4 are a parenthetical flashback or backdrop to fill in details necessary for understanding the full context of the end time events. These verses cover the sun-clothed woman (12:1-17), the two beasts (13:1-18), the redemption of the remnant of Israel (14:1-5), the three angelic warnings (14:6-13), the harvest of the earth (14:14-20), and the preparations for the pouring out of the seven last plagues (15:1-4). The chronological sequence of the 21 events is not

broken.

The Seven Vials of Wrath (15:6-16:21)

We pick up the chronological narrative again at 15:5 and continue with the pouring out of the seven vials of wrath (15:6-16:21). Remember, the 24 elders have just declared the wrath of God “is come” (11:18) moments earlier. And that Revelation 11:15-19 harmonizes with 15:1-16:21. For example, the aforementioned temple is seen opened in heaven is seen in both 11:19 and 15:5; the four aspects of voices, thunders, lightnings; and an earthquake are witnessed in 11:19 and 16:18; and the “great hail” is beheld in 11:19 and 16:21. Thus it is no surprise that we immediately see the seven angels with “seven golden vials full of the wrath of God” (15:7). Here again, God’s wrath is clearly in view. The seven angels are given one single collective command to pour out the vials, so we can infer that they are all poured out in rapid sequence, even on this one final day of the wrath of God. Any hesitation on the part of any one angel to immediately obey the command would be unthinkable.

We also see here the single-day event usually referred to as the Battle of Armageddon (15:16). We know it is concluded in one day because 15:14 literally calls it “the battle of that great day of God Almighty”. *Thus, the three unclean spirits have been at work for some time toward the end of gathering the kings of the earth to battle as seen in the parenthetical 15:13-14.* Only upon the outpouring of the sixth vial (16:12) is the gathering to battle finalized.

We also see that Babylon is given “the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath” (16:19). We are later told that Babylon is destroyed “in one hour” (18:10, 17, 19), so again we see a major prophecy fulfilled within this same singular day, known as the Day of the Lord.

The Sixth Seal (6:12-17)

We abbreviated the sixth seal (6:12-17) above because a complex explanation is required. This event is puzzling to many because it appears to correlate with the final vial of wrath (16:17-21) as both mention a great earthquake moving every island and mountain out of place:

12 And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; 13 And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. 14 And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. 15 And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; 16 And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: 17 For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

Here men hide themselves in the mountains and declare that “the great day of [the Lamb’s] wrath is come” (6:17), however we should remember that these are *lost men* who are *presuming* God’s wrath has come, not to be confused with an infallible declaration from heaven as we later hear from *the 24 elders* at the seventh trumpet that “thy [God’s] wrath is

come" (11:18). These men *believe* it is the Day of the Lord because the signs include the celestial signs (sun, moon, and stars) associated with that day. They are familiar with clear passages associating such signs with the day of the Lord such as Isaiah 2:19, 13:9-10, 24:23, Ezekiel 32:7-8, Joel 2:10-11, Haggai 2:6, Matthew 24:29-30, Mark 13:24-26, Luke 21:25-28.

They fear and seek to hide from "the face of him that sitteth on the throne," however it is *not* declared in the passage that Jesus has actually appeared. This is not yet the Second Coming, as some (including these men) have supposed.

Perhaps we should see the celestial signs of the sixth seal as merciful pleadings of the Lord. A temporary blackening of the sun, blood-red moon, or starless sky is not going to kill anyone. Such signs, however, would likely perplex scientists and cause many to repent. Mere solar and lunar eclipses signs do not strike such terror into humans, even to the point of "men's hearts failing them for fear" (Luke 21:26), and can safely be eliminated from discussion of this sign. Moreover, mere eclipses do not cause stars to vanish as seen in Joel 2:10.

We soon see that these signs are only *temporary* and are to be repeated with greater severity on later occasions. At the later third trumpet, a star called Wormwood falls from heaven (8:10-11). The sun, moon and stars evidently reappear because they are again smitten at the fourth trumpet (8:12). And at the fifth trumpet, we see another star fall from heaven and the sun again darkened (9:1-2). Then, within the seventh trumpet with the fourth vial, the sun is afflicted and scorches men with great heat (16:8-9).

Moreover, the mountains and islands are merely "moved out of their places" (6:14) at the sixth seal and men can still find and enter the mountains and pray to them. At the seventh vial, the great earthquake (16:18) is so severe that every island flees away and the mountains cannot be found (16:20).

Also, there is a minimum time period of five months separating the breaking of the sixth seal and sounding of the seventh trumpet as the locust plague of the fifth trumpet (9:5, 10) lasts this long. Thus, the two events beginning months apart *cannot* be the same event.

But are there any verses which indicate celestial "warnings" *before* the final day of the Lord or when that day has not yet come, but is *near*? Yes. Joel 3:14-15 tells us, "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD is *near* in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining." And, in reference to Joel, Acts 2:19-21 tells us, "And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, *before* that great and notable day of the Lord come: And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Thus, we conclude that the sixth seal is definitely a stern wake-up call to man embodying a worldwide earthquake and celestial signs that many mistakenly believe to be the advent of God's wrath. Yet, his wrath is restrained at this point, but rather is poured out at the seventh trumpet as declared by God's 24 elders.

THE TWO WITNESSES - RAISED OR RESURRECTED?

Revelation 11:3-14 tells us of two Godly witnesses who prophesy for 1260 days, after which they are martyred. Their bodies are never buried, but lie in the street in Jerusalem as the centerpiece of a worldly celebration. After three and a half days, God raises them upon their feet and they ascend up to heaven in a cloud. Within the same hour of this ascension, a great earthquake destroys one-tenth of Jerusalem, killing 7000 men, the remnant glorifying God.

We need to examine this miraculous event. Is it a mere *raising* of the dead, such as that of Lazarus who later died? Or, is it a *resurrection* of the dead, the witnesses never to die again? If this is “a” resurrection, could this event be a small focus of the Resurrection-Rapture?

Two Witnesses Raised?

There are nine accounts in Scripture of people who were raised miraculously from the dead bodily and yet not glorified as in a resurrection.²¹ We reason that they did not put on immortality when they were raised. Citing the most famous such example, Lazarus was raised from the dead, but must have died later because we do not see him alive with us today. There is not even any account in first or second century church letters that he lived to an oddly advanced age, whether youthful or elderly in appearance. Neither do any of the nine accounts mention any ascent into heaven in a cloud. We can only conclude that these nine cases later resulted in natural deaths.

Two Witnesses Resurrected?

Since we have seen that all saints are raised on the last day at the last trumpet and gathered into clouds, we need to explore whether this passage may be speaking of the Resurrection-Rapture. Even though these are indeed mighty servants of God, are they deemed worthy to be resurrected separately? Or are they, along with all the saints, changed at the Resurrection-Rapture?

The two witnesses prophesy 1260 days, so it is quite possible that they begin their testimony before the sixth trumpet sounds. In fact, they are able to turn waters to blood,²² suggesting a role as early as the second trumpet.²³ It appears as though the entire 1263.5-day story of the two witnesses is parenthetical. As noted earlier under “The Seven Trumpets”, the narrative of the sixth trumpet (second woe) seems to be completed by Revelation 9:13-21, the obvious woe being 200 million [demonic] horsemen who reduce world population by one-third. It could be argued, however, the final woeful event of the sixth trumpet may be the Jerusalem earthquake.²⁴ We break into a parenthesis from 10:1 to 11:2 which speaks of the seven thunders, the eating of the little book, and the measuring of the temple. These passages would not normally be considered as warnings of woeful events. Likewise, the raising of the

21 1 Kings 17:17-24; 2 Kings 4:32-37, 13:21; Matt 27:52-53; Mark 5:21-43; Luke 7:11-17; John 11:1-44; Acts 9:36-42, 20:9-12.

22 Rev 11:6 These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

23 Rev 8:8 And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;

24 Rev 11:13 And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

two witnesses is not a woeful event which brings death or pain; rather it is an act of “the Spirit of life from God”.²⁵

Hence, the two witnesses narrative as parenthetical has high merit. If parenthetical, then the two witnesses are not strictly bound to testify within the sixth trumpet. Thus, their raising could easily occur alongside millions of other sleeping in Christ at the seventh and last trumpet at the last day. In fact, we would *expect* the Two to be raised on the last day, even as Jesus clearly declared “that *every one* which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up *at the last day*” (John 6:40). If the two witnesses are slain at the end of the second woe, then it would make sense that the third woe (seventh trumpet) which “cometh quickly”²⁶ thereafter could easily be a mere 3.5 days later at the Resurrection-Rapture heralded by the last trumpet. Also, since the world is now at peace after the “war” (Rev 11:7) against God’s witnesses, the temporarily victorious proclaim, “Peace and safety”. Then, “sudden destruction cometh upon them” in the very context of the Day of the Lord (1 Thes 5:2-3).

Still, the actual glorification, or resurrection, must occur at the first resurrection, and therefore may be up to 24 hours later,

MOSES, ENOCH, AND ELIJAH

Moses was personally and privately buried by God (Deut 34:6), the focus of a dispute with the Devil over his body (Jude 9). Perhaps Enoch and Elijah received similar burials and their bodies have been returned to the dust as Ecc 3:20 and 12:7 suggest, and not “raptured”. Enoch never ascended into the sky, but was merely “translated” and his body/grave was “not found” (Heb 11:5), Elijah was taken by “a whirlwind (storm) into heaven (the sky)” (2 Kings 2:11), and despite a three-day search by fifty servants, his body/grave was never found (2 Kings 2:17). Of certainty, Enoch and Elijah's *souls* descended into Paradise in the lower parts of the Earth which was then its location. Their bodies are not yet glorified.

1 THESSALONIANS 4:13-5:11 PARAPHRASES MATTHEW 24:29-31

The primary text speaking of the Resurrection-Rapture is 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11. Here we learn that Paul wishes to enlighten, comfort and edify his readers (4:13, 18, 5:11) concerning the events of the future “day of the Lord” (5:2) or the “coming of the Lord” (4:15). He identifies the “dead in Christ” (4:16) as “them which are asleep” (4:13, 15) or those who “sleep in Jesus” (4:14) who “shall rise first” (4:16) and who God will “bring with him” (4:14). He identifies the saints who are still living on this day as “we which are alive and remain” (4:15, 17) who then “shall be caught up together with [the dead in Christ] in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air” (4:17). The living saints “shall not prevent” (4:15), or precede, the dead.

4:13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring

²⁵ Rev 11:11 And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

²⁶ Rev 11:14 The second woe is past; *and*, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.

with him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the *coming* of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend *from heaven* with a shout, with the voice of the *archangel*, and with the *trump* of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be *caught up together* with them *in the clouds* to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words. 5:1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. 2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. 3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. 4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. 5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. 6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. 7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. 8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation. 9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. 11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

It should first be noted that the very obvious has been spoken by Paul, Because of the chapter break between 1 Thes 4 and 5, and the pervasive influence of movies and paperback books, I believe that many have missed this. Yet, there is simply no valid reason to conclude that Paul speaks of one day in 1 Thes 4, then suddenly begins to speak of an entirely different day (supposedly up to seven years later) in chapter 5. Paul shifts his focus to the *timing* of the day being discussed, not to another day entirely, but of the one he has been writing about. However, this is the unique “catching up” passage that actually describes the Rapture, leading many to make such a spurious conclusion based on their presuppositions, and nothing else.

Paul was directly referring to the following words of Jesus in the Olivet Discourse as he wrote and he tells us so (“For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord ..,” 1 Thes 4:15, with no comparable Old Testament reference). Very importantly, this passage pinpoints in time the *catching-up* as undeniably *post-tribulation*:

29 Immediately *after the tribulation* of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: 30 and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in *heaven*: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man *coming* in the *clouds* of *heaven* with power and great glory. 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. (Matt 24:29-31; *cp.* Mark 13:24-27)

As italicized above, we clearly see Paul was paraphrasing Jesus in that both passages teach the *coming* (1 Thes 4:15, Matt 24:30) of the Lord *in the clouds* (1 Thes 4:17, Matt 24:30) of *heaven* (1 Thes 4:16, Matt 24:30) with *the archangel/angels* (1 Thes 4:16, Matt 24:31) and a *trumpet* blast (1 Thes 4:16, Matt 24:31) to *gather together* or *catch up together* (1 Thes 4:17, Matt 24:31) his elect. Paul focused on the elect “which are alive and remain” (1 Thes

4:15,17), whereas Jesus spoke in a broader sense of “his elect” (Matt 24:31). Both Jesus and Paul spoke of only *one* gathering of the elect.

AS A THIEF IN THE NIGHT

As seen above, Paul also likens the coming day of the Lord to “as a thief in the night” (1 Thes 5:2) which shall overtake unbelievers who are “of the night” (5:5) and foolishly “sleep” (5:6-7) and are “drunken” (5:7) in “darkness” (5:4-5), believing themselves to be in “peace and safety” (5:3). The believing “brethren” (4:13, 5:1,4), however, are characterized as “the children of light” and “the children of the day” (5:5, 8) who are encouraged to “watch” (5:6) and be “sober” (5:6,8) and shall *not* be overtaken by the day as a thief (5:4), but are appointed “to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ” and not the wrath of God (5:9).

This same idea of the day of the Lord coming as a thief is also mentioned by Peter:

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. (2 Peter 3:10)

The analogy appears to have originated in the words of Jesus:

Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. (Matt 24:42-44)

And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. (Luke 12:39)

Jesus reiterates this warning twice in Revelation:

Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. (Rev 3:3)

Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. (Rev 16:15)

From these verses, we can glean the following:

1. The time context of the Thief is the Day of the Lord, not some previous day.²⁷
2. The unfaithful are unaware, not watching, and are overtaken as by a thief.²⁸

²⁷ 1Thes 5:2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh **as a thief in the night**. 2 Peter 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come **as a thief in the night**.

²⁸ 1Thes 5:3 For when **they** shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon **them**, as travail upon a woman with child; and **they** shall not escape. Rev 3:3 **If** therefore **thou shalt not watch**, I will come on thee as a thief

3. The watchful brethren may be overtaken, but not as by a thief.²⁹

In Revelation 16:15, the Lord announces, “Behold, I come as a thief” on the Day of the Lord between the sixth and seventh vials of wrath as though to pinpoint the deadline event in time.

It should be abundantly clear that references to the thief cannot be attributed to any alleged pre-tribulation Rapture. The thief comes on the post-tribulation Day of the Lord. Thus any analogy to a secret unexpected pre-trib rapture is out of context and ignorant of the truth.

1 CORINTHIANS 15:51-58

Another passage which sheds light on the rapture is in 1 Corinthians 15. Again, the dead in Christ are said to be those who “sleep” (51). The dead are “raised” (52) and along with the living, are “changed” (51, 52). Both the living and the sleeping saints thus pass from a state of *corruption to incorruption* and from *mortality to immortality* (52-54). This idea of corruption to incorruption is also seen earlier in the immediate context of this passage: “So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption” (42). The gift of the victory of our Lord Jesus Christ swallows and triumphs over death, its sting (sin, the strength of which is the law), and the grave (54-57).

51 Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,
52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?
56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMP

As noted earlier, both of these events, the raising of the dead and living and their subsequent change, occur in the same day of time, “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump” (1 Corinthians 15:52). Since we have already seen that the raising of the dead and rapture occur on the Day of the Lord, we see that this “last trump” is the same as “the trump of God” mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 4:16 when “the dead in Christ shall rise.”³⁰

The “trump of God” of 1 Thessalonians 4:16 is not necessarily sounded by God himself. It could be sounded by an angel as is the seventh trumpet of Revelation and that God merely descends when the angel sounds.

²⁹ 1Thes 5:4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

³⁰ 1 Thes 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the **trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise** first:

Here is the text relative to the seventh trumpet of Revelation 11:

14 The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly. 15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever. 16 And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshiped God, 17 saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. 18 And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. 19 And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

So, the events of the seventh trumpet can be summarized as:

1. God replaces the temporal worldly kingdoms with his own eternal kingdom and assumes reign with power, angering the nations (15, 17-18)
2. God's wrath is come (18)
3. The dead are judged (18)
4. The faithful are rewarded (18)
5. Those who destroy the earth are destroyed (19)
6. The heavenly temple is opened, revealing the ark of God's testament (19)
7. Lightnings, voices, thunderings, an earthquake, great hail (19)

Another supportive clue that indicates the last trump is the seventh is that God is likely to descend (1 Thessalonians 4:16) to earth when he establishes his kingdom here and begins to reign. Another is that God's wrath is finally unleashed on the wicked.

SAINTS ARE APPOINTED TO TRIBULATION

Contrary to popular teaching, tribulation is one of the things that Christians are to *expect* in this life as a tool of God to produce patience and other fruits in the heart of the believer. If tribulation benefits believers, then *great* tribulation should benefit them even greater! Strong's #2347 "thlipsis" is used 45 times in the New Testament, usually translated as *tribulation* or *affliction*. The idea is that of persecution by unbelievers, not the wrath of God.

Here are some examples of the use of *thlipsis* (in italics):

Then shall they deliver you up to be *afflicted*, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. (Matt 24:9)

For then shall be great *tribulation*, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. (Matt 24:21, *cp.* Mark 13:19)

Immediately after the *tribulation* of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: (Matt 24:29, similar to Mark 13:24)

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have *tribulation*: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. (John 16:33)

We must through much *tribulation* enter into the kingdom of God. (Acts 14:22)

And not only so, but we glory in *tribulations* also: knowing that *tribulation* worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. (Rom 5:3-5)

Rejoicing in hope; patient in *tribulation*; continuing instant in prayer; (Rom 12:12)

Who comforteth us in all our *tribulation*, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. (2 Cor 1:4-5)

For our light *affliction*, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; (2 Cor 4:17)

How that in a great trial of *affliction* the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. (2 Cor 8:2)

That no man should be moved by these *afflictions*: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. (1 Thes 3:3)

These are they which came out of great *tribulation*, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. (Rev 7:14)

WHEN DO THE SAINTS RECEIVE REST?

Contrary to popular teaching, the troubled saints do not receive their rest seven years before the Day of the Lord. 2 Thes 1:7 clearly teaches that our “rest” comes only “when” Jesus is “revealed from heaven”. And lest one claim this is 7 years before the Day of the Lord, this is on the Day of the Lord’s “vengeance”.

6 Seeing *it is* a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; 7 and to you who are troubled *rest* with us, *when* the Lord Jesus shall be *revealed* from heaven with his mighty angels, 8 in *flaming fire taking vengeance* on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

PARABLES OF JESUS TEACH A POST-TRIBULATION END OF THE WORLD

There are two parables of Jesus, told only in Matthew 13, which clearly teach a single separating event of the wicked severed from the just. In both parables, the wicked are gathered *first* (not the opposite as is commonly taught today), leaving the righteous to remain for God's purposes. The term "the end of the world" is used in both passages, exactly as it reads in other passages, such as the disciples' question, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of *the end of the world*?" (Matt 24:3), and in Jesus' promise, "I am with you always, even unto *the end of the world*" (Matt 28:20).

It should be stressed that, of the approximately 30 parables that Jesus told, only four were interpreted by him, including these two. The other two were the Sower (Matt 13:1-23, Mark 4:1-20, Luke 8:4-15) and the Fig Tree (Matt 24:32-36, Mark 13:28-32, Luke 21:29-33). Thus, there is no room for human interpretation regarding these passages. Jesus spells out exactly what they mean.

Parable of the Wheat and Tares (Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43)

In the first parable, a sower's wheat field is found to also contain tares (weeds), the work of an enemy. Eager to pull the tares, the workers are instructed to let them "grow together" with the wheat "until the harvest," at which time they are to bundle the tares "first" and burn them, *then* store the remaining wheat into the barn.

24 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: 25 but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. 26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. 27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? 28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? 29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. 30 *Let both grow together* until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, *Gather ye together first the tares*, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

Soon afterward, Jesus explains the parable. The harvest is identified as "the end of the world" (a single event) when "the children of the wicked one" are first "gathered" by "the angels" for "a furnace of fire," leaving the righteous "children of the kingdom" to "shine forth as the sun."

36 ...his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. 37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; 38 the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked *one*; 39 the enemy that sowed them is the devil; *the harvest is the end of the world*; and the reapers are the angels. 40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in *the end of this world*. 41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and *they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend*, and them which do iniquity; 42 and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43 *Then shall the*

righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Frankly, I cannot see how I was ever so deceived as into believing the opposite is true.

Parable of the Net (Matthew 13:47-50)

As with the single harvest, there is a single casting of the net which is then sat onshore. Notice that the wicked are severed from the just, not the just from the wicked as is commonly taught today. In one single sitting “at the end of the world”, the good are gathered and the bad are cast away.

47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: 48 which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. 49 So shall it be at *the end of the world*: the angels shall come forth, and *sever the wicked from among the just*, 50 and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Again, Jesus' interpreted parables should make things crystal clear as to the order of events.

TWO WORLDS: ONE ENDING; ONE ETERNAL

When studying the meaning of “the end of the world” (often translated as “the end of this age”), we need to understand that Scripture tells us there are two worlds (two ages). The present world in which we now live is evil and temporal, the age to come is righteous and eternal.

... it shall not be forgiven him, neither in *this world*, neither in the *world to come*. (Matt 12:32)

Who shall not receive manifold more in *this present time*, and in the *world to come* life everlasting. (Luke 18:30)

In whom *the god of this world* hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, (2 Cor 4:4)

Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from *this present evil world*, according to the will of God and our Father: (Gal 1:4)

For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved *this present world* (2 Tim 4:10)

These verses are not speaking of this present age as being “the church age” as is commonly taught. In fact, the word “church” is translated as “congregation” throughout the Old Testament as evidenced by the Septuagint. Unfortunately, this present evil age will grow worse and worse until it ends on the Day of the Lord. This present world will not end seven years before that Day. As seen in the following verses, “the end” implies the end of this present evil age in the context of saints enduring this present tribulation until “the coming of

our Lord Jesus Christ” on “the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to *the end* shall be saved. (Matt 10:22, *cp.* Mark 13:13)

But he that shall endure unto *the end*, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall *the end* come. (Matt 24:13-14)

So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for *the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*: who shall also confirm you unto *the end*, that ye may be blameless *in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ*. (1Co 1:7-8)

Then cometh *the end*, when he shall have *delivered up the kingdom* to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. (1Co 15:24)

But that which ye have already hold fast *till I come*. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto *the end*, to him will I give power over the nations: (Rev 2:25-26)

ANTICHRIST IS RESTRAINED, THEN REVEALED

To reveal the actual identity of “the restrainer” is beyond the scope of this paper. But to debunk two popular theories is important to understanding the Rapture, so I will attempt to disprove them.

2 Thes 2:1-12 teaches us very important signs concerning the Antichrist, including how and when he is revealed:

1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by *the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*, and by our gathering together unto him, 2 that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that *the day of Christ* is at hand.

We first see that the context is the Second Coming upon the Day of the Lord. As we have seen earlier, this is also the Resurrection-Rapture. The term “at hand” refers to the doctrine of “imminence” with no specific signs to be watching for. Paul was attempting to correct this false teaching that apparently some Thessalonians believed. This error is still widely taught today.

3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall *not* come, *except* there come a falling away *first*, and that man of sin be *revealed*, the son of perdition; 4 who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. 5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

Here we see that the Resurrection-Rapture *cannot* happen until *after* the “man of sin” (a violator of God’s Law) or “son of perdition” (a destroyer who himself shall be destroyed) is

clearly revealed by his blasphemous self-promotion as “God”. This is Antichrist. Paul had previously discussed this subject with the Thessalonians in person.

6 And now ye know *what* withholdeth that he might be *revealed* in his time. 7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only *he* who now letteth will let, until *he* be taken out of the way. 8 And then shall that Wicked be *revealed*, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: 9 even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, 10 and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12 that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

What is it that which “withholdeth” the revelation of “that Wicked” (lawless) man and is eventually “taken out of the way”? Paul had already discussed this with his readers, so does not elaborate here.

Some have suggested that it is the Christian church that restrains and is then raptured, allowing the Antichrist to be revealed. Yet, no mention of the church is made anywhere in this context. Notwithstanding, we have already seen that the Resurrection-Rapture of the Church on the Day of the Lord can take place only *after* this man of sin is revealed.

Some have suggested that the Holy Spirit is the restrainer. The Holy Spirit is entirely absent from the context as well and is thereby a purely speculative candidate to begin with. Notwithstanding, can the Holy Spirit really be “taken out of the way” from the earth? Jesus tells us in John 14:16-17 that the Father “shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.” This is one of the most important provisions of the New Covenant! It is unthinkable that the comforting Spirit which abides with and *dwells within* Christians *forever* would somehow evade and shun the children of God who are being highly persecuted during the Tribulation, thus *breaking* God’s New Covenant with believers. To the contrary, it is the indwelling Holy Spirit who will give saints words of wisdom while on trial during those days (Matt 10:17-20, Mark 13:11, Luke 12:11-12, 21:12-15).

THE SEVEN-DAY WARNING TO NOAH

As a former pre-tribulation rapturist, I was stirred one evening in prayer to read a specific verse. I audibly heard the still small voice say, “Genesis seven: thirteen.” Upon arising and reading the text, I was initially disappointed with what I saw as a rather mundane verse:

In the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah’s wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark;
(Gen 7:13)

My initially arrogant reaction was to inform God, “I already know that.” I glibly parroted my standard line to God, “Eight souls entered the Ark and the door was shut, then seven days

later it began to rain; therefore the seven days inside the safety of the Ark symbolize the seven years of tribulation, prior to which we are to be removed in the Rapture.” I wondered why God was bothering “to teach me something I already knew.”

But, what “selfsame day” is cited? Was it really seven days before the Flood began? No. We are told two verses earlier that it was *the very day* that the Deluge began:

In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. (Gen 7:11)

Upon carefully studying the entire passage, we see that God first told Noah to “come thou and all thy house into the ark ... for [in] yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth” (7:1, 4). Noah had seven days to load the animals. “And it came to pass *after seven days*, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth” (7:10). We see this seventh day, chronicled as the great 17th day of the 2nd month (7:11) when the Flood began, as *the selfsame day* that the humans finally entered the Ark (7:13) and were “shut” in (7:16). The eight souls did *not* make their final boarding of the Ark on the 10th day of the 2nd month, as millions of Christians are currently taught.

The point is that Noah was not given a same-day warning to board the Ark. He was not antotypically “caught up” without warning. In fact, he was foretold of seven days during which he had much work to do. These were seven literal days, not seven years. Prior to the seven-day warning from God, Noah probably only knew the season was at hand for the impending judgment, but not the exact day. Noah was left upon the earth until the last possible day (and perhaps the last possible hour) to warn people of the coming doom. He was in no way symbolically “raptured” out seven years or even seven days before absolutely necessary. It appears as though Noah was informed of the exact day a mere seven days in advance to stress that the most important work (the preservation of life, *i.e.* salvation) was to be pursued with steadfast diligence and urgency. God knew seven final days of work were required for the final task of loading the animals, thus Noah was apparently told of the exact day only on the latest possible day. Could it be that we may similarly be forewarned only a matter of days before the Second Coming? Yes or no, we are encouraged to remain watchful.

JESUS PRAYED AGAINST A PRE-RESURRECTION-DAY RAPTURE

Jesus did not teach a pre-tribulation rapture, mid-tribulation rapture, or any version other than the Rapture-Resurrection. We have already seen this in the Parables and Olivet Discourse. In fact, Jesus clearly prayed that believers (both concurrent and future) would remain in the world, yet miraculously be kept from evil. Obviously, the Father favored the Son’s prayer:

I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray *not* that thou shouldest *take them out* of the world, but that thou shouldest *keep them from* the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. ... Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; (John 17:14-16, 20)

Why are millions of churchgoers praying *against* the will of Jesus? Could we be living in the midst of the foretold great apostasy?

To be fair and honest, I must say here that the subject of Jesus' prayer here is not necessarily the Rapture. He could just as easily be speaking of saints who may wish to remove themselves from the world (and evangelical duties) by secluding themselves into some sort of monastery or similar separation, for example.

But, the overall prayer is either violated by a believer's Rapture timing or it is not. Saints are taken out of the world daily by simple death, but the bigger idea here is that in no way, shape, or form are we to be removed from the world in any other way.. And knowing that his prayer means saints are to remain in the world, he prays that they will be kept from the evil at work therein.

There are two, and only two, possible scenarios:

1. God keeps us from the evil by taking us out of the world.
2. God keeps us from the evil by NOT taking us out of the world.

Scenario 1 completely *ignores* Jesus' prayer. Scenario 2 completely *agrees* with Jesus' prayer. Why on Earth would any born-again Christian agree with Scenario 1 and reject Scenario 2? It boggles the mind, but millions do.

Here we see the idea that Jesus clearly prays *against* the popular notion regarding the elect that the Father should "take them out of the world" (v 15). Jesus specifically prays that believers be protected from evil in such a way that does *not* require their physical removal. And yet, Paul teaches that "we which are alive and remain [on earth] shall be caught up together with [the dead in Christ] in the clouds" (1 Thes 4:17). Is this a contradiction? For the pre-tribber, this is indeed a *big* contradiction! But, for the post-tribber, there is no contradiction whatsoever. Why not? Because, as of the seventh and last trumpet, the "world" has ceased to exist. "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of *this world* are become *the kingdoms of our Lord*, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev 11:15). Thus, saints are to be taken from the *earth*, but not from the *world* (i.e. the world system of political kingdoms and nations). Saints are physically removed at the earliest possible moment which does not reject Jesus' prayer.

Some suggest that perhaps the reason Jesus prayed thusly was to prevent a mass rapture-style translation of believers when filled with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. This is not a bad theory, but we still must discern that the Father's answer to Jesus' prayer was certainly *not* along the compromising line of, "Son, I can only meet you half-way on that one: Whereas I may not remove them now, I fully intend to indeed take millions of saints from the world in what shall become known as the pre-tribulation rapture." Certainly, the Father answers the prayer of John 17 (arguably the most important prayer in the Bible) with an absolute and unreserved, "Amen!"

Pre-trib commentary on John 17:15 tends to pass over the phrase, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world", selectively focusing on the words "keep" and "from" in the second half of the verse in sometimes a whole chapter of attempts to "prove" that this

word combination could conceivably mean that Jesus is “in fact” praying that believers be physically removed from the world. The net effect (although they dare not spell it out) is to *reverse* and completely *nullify* Jesus’ prayer to re-read, “I pray *not* that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou *shouldst* take them out of the world.” Is it possible to tread on thinner ice than to modify Jesus’ words in such a frivolous manner?

The pre-trib theory (and indeed any theory whereby believers are taken from the world before the last trumpet) is thoroughly eliminated as even a remote possibility by Jesus’ prayer. If this seems like merely a post-trib interpretation, let the reader refer to the aforementioned parables of the Wheat/Tares and the Net, which Jesus succinctly interprets for us. The true horror of any pre-resurrection-day rapture theory is that it must first demote Jesus to an ineffectual man of prayer (at best) or suggest he is a false christ or false prophet (at worst).

There is neither any reason nor even a hint of a promise that we should collectively be removed from this present world before it ends because it would be totally unnecessary. We are already “not of the world”. Jesus, praying from a timeless perspective, knew that a final few years of persecution (that no man’s *flesh* desires) would be an imperceptibly small time span in eternity. And yet, such a small time span would allow millions of saints to glorify God while seeing His mighty hand keep and protect them from the most vile of evil. Moreover, such a time of affliction will earn many the rewards of martyrdom. It is the eternal purpose and will of God that we should embrace in the Spirit, not resist in the flesh.

OBJECTION 1 -THE YET UNKNOWN DAY AND HOUR

One objection to the post-tribulation view is that Jesus declared that the day and hour of the Second Coming was known only to the Father. As the Son in the first century, even Jesus did not know. The context is the watchfulness of the saints vs. the folly of the unwatchful.

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... Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. (Matt 24:31, 35-36)

Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. ... The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of. (Matt 24:44, 50)

Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh. (Matt 25:13)

But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. (Mark 13:32-33)

Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not. ... The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware... (Luke 12:40, 46)

It is argued that any believer who is faithfully watching for the signs would be able to pinpoint the day by simply counting periods of 1260 days (Rev 11:3, 12:6), 42 months (Rev 11:2, 13:5), 1290 days (Dan 12:11), 1335 days (Dan 12:12), 2300 days (Dan 8:14), and a time, times, and a half (Dan 7:25, 12:7; Rev 12:14). Thus, it is argued that the unknown day and hour of which Jesus spoke (presumptively a pre-tribulation rapture) must *not* be preceded by *any* visible signs or events. However, we have already seen that certain signs *must* occur prior to the Second Coming when the saints are gathered.

Most decidedly, Jesus specifically noted that the unknown “day and hour” shall fall “after the tribulation” (Matt 24:29, 36), so any notion of seeing this day and hour in any pre-tribulation context is unmitigated error to begin with. Nonetheless, a Biblical solution to the objection is sought.

It is often claimed that Jesus said no one can know the day or hour. Jesus never said this! We should first note that the words “knoweth” and “know” in these passages are in the tense-voice-mood of perfect-active-indicative, hence the idea of “no one has known” as of the time Jesus spoke this truth. Had Jesus intended to teach that the exact day and hour were to *forever* remain a mystery, he most likely would have clarified the matter with the future-indicative (“no one shall know”) or the present-subjunctive (“no one may know”).

The solution to this question requires such basic Biblical understanding that this author is surprised that many believers have missed it. Jesus clearly taught that *everything* that had been revealed to him by the Father, he *taught* to his followers. Modern-day saints, being no less loved than the original disciples, must of course also have this same complete revelation of the Father in the teachings of Jesus through the diligent study of Scripture.

All things that I have *heard* of my Father I have *made known* unto you. (John 15:15)

For I have *given unto them* the words which thou [the Father] *gavest me*... (John 17:8)

For I have not *spoken* of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should *say*, and what I should *speak*. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I *speak* therefore, even as the Father *said* unto me, so I *speak*. (John 12:49-50)

As my Father hath *taught* me, I *speak* these things. (John 8:28)

Thus, had the Father revealed to the Son the day and/or the hour, Jesus would have been *duty-bound* to share this information with all believers. Therefore, the Father did *not* wish saints of that generation to know the day nor the hour, nor even the general times or the seasons: “It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power” (Acts 1:7). Why not? Had saints of any past generation known that Jesus would return only in the 21st century, would they not have been tempted to casually neglect Jesus’ admonition to be watchful? Important to *all* generations, the major thrust of the heed to watchfulness involves not merely noting prophetic signs, but being mindful to avoid the pitfalls of common sins:

And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. (Luke 21:34)

But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; the lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. (Luke 12:45-46)

But, to the final generation of the Great Tribulation, could the precise Day of the Lord be known in advance? Could the above-mentioned time periods be intended to comfort saints through chronological insights? Perhaps, but there may always be some doubt as to the exact nature of the events prophesied. As postulated earlier, perhaps the death of the Two Witnesses will signify 3.5 days (84 hours) until the Resurrection-Rapture when final trumpet sounds. If so, we would know even the precise hour! But, this assumes that the witnesses are *humans* who are to be resurrected. Some have suggested, for example, that the witnesses are the angels Michael and Gabriel. While if human, why assume that the Two are being “raised incorruptible” (1 Cor 15:52), whereas we may initially only see their bodies raised as was that of Lazarus some time before they are actually glorified? In fact, since the dead in Christ are raised before any of the living are raptured, and that the *change* occurs later on the same day, we would thus conclude that if human, the Two Witnesses are merely raised initially, before being raised *incorruptible*.

There seems to be a degree of uncertainty to God’s timing, perhaps even until the final hour when we know that unbelievers shall be overtaken as though by a thief. We also know, however, that the ever-watchful faithful are *not* to be overtaken as by a thief. In light of this fact, one wonders why God would specify exact numbers of days (3.5, 1260, 1290, 1335, 2300) if not to notify the watchful of particular days to expect prophecy to be fulfilled, perhaps even of our final deliverance on the heretofore unknown Day of the Lord.

OBJECTION 2 - THE FLESH-AND-BLOOD CITIZENS OF THE MILLENNIUM

Clearly, there are unglorified inhabitants of the earth after the Day of the Lord who were not changed at the Resurrection-Rapture. They spawn children and die (Isa 65:20). And yet, Scripture teaches that on the Day of the Lord, all believers are glorified and all sinners are killed (Matthew 13:30, 36–43, 47–50; 24:36–41; 25:31–46). A popular question among Rapture enthusiasts has been to identify who these pioneering saints are any why are they yet alive, but unglorified. Just who are the flesh-and-blood saints who populate the Millennium?

How Not to Solve the Question

When frustrated over Biblical difficulties, humans have a tendency to propose *ad hoc* “out of thin air” theories to solve the apparent contradiction, and then attempt to find or interpret verses to support our ideas. This is exactly what the pre-tribulationists have done regarding the flesh-and-blood question. Zealous over having “solved” the question, they have forgotten to provide a single verse that actually showcases a pre-trib rapture. Cult groups quote

passages that they twist according to their biases, but pre-tribbers do not even quote a verse to begin with. The pre-trib theory was largely formulated *ad hoc* as an attempt to answer questions such as this and the unknown day and hour. Yet, pre-tribbers fail to realize that their theory not only has no verse supporting it, but actually *contradicts* many scriptures: not the least of which being the prayer of John 17:15, and should immediately be abandoned in an attitude of repentance.

Anyone can propose *ad hoc* solutions to the question which can be quite ridiculous if imaginations run wild. Here is an extreme example: The prophet Jabez will build a teleportation device and remove believers to the moon in suspended animation for seven years. This “solves” the dilemma by saying that Jabez takes them out of the world, not God. Although there is no clear Scripture *supporting* this idea, since it cannot quickly be *disproved* by Scripture as a mere *straw man*, it arrogantly “solves” the question. Space aliens could do the same thing, *ad nauseam*.

Moreover, pre-tribulationists should not claim debate victories if their post-trib opponent admits he does not know the answer to the question. In reality, the pre-trib debater does not know the answer either! If the post-tribber honestly has no reply, he should respond, “I don’t know, but I *do* know the answer does *not* entail a pre-trib rapture because of the many passages which disprove the pre-trib theory.” Likewise, the pre-trib theorist should humbly agree, “Neither do I know, because of the passages you cite.” Christianity should not be about making the best show, but rather endeavoring to discern the Bible-based truth.

Solving the Question Biblically

Rather than proposing frustration-borne *ad hoc* precepts and presumptions, let us see if Scripture itself will lead and guide us toward the answer in line with the Biblical principal of interpretation that “precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little” (Isa 28:10).

When Jesus comes with the clouds, “every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail [mourn] because of him” (Rev 1:7).

It was the religious yet rebellious Jews of Jesus’ day who pierced him (Acts 4:10, John 19:37). Revelation 7:1-8 speaks of the sealing of the 144,000 remnant Israelites who are sealed for physical protection from the coming plagues of the seven trumpets where the earth, sea, and trees are afflicted. This is a supernatural physical salvation only as was that seen for the mourners of Ezekiel 9:4-7. This physical protection is required to preserve their exact number, even exactly 12,000 from each tribe. As the remnant of Israel, they receive the salvation *of their souls* only upon seeing the Lord at his coming to Jerusalem upon the Mount of Olives. The raising of the dead and rapture have occurred just moments earlier, soon to be glorified and no longer able to spawn children. Thus, the 144,000 become the flesh-and-blood (not glorified) saints who initially populate the Millennium and are able to produce offspring over the following centuries.

In c.518 BC, in Zechariah 12:1, God begins to speak. In verse 10, He foretells the Crucifixion of Jesus when he states that “the inhabitants of Jerusalem ... shall look upon *me* whom they have pierced.” Their mourning is seen as the repentance of the remnant of Israel:

9 And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. 10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, the spirit of grace and of supplications: *and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced*, and they shall *mourn* for him, as one *mourneth* for his only son, and shall be in *bitterness* for him, as one that is in *bitterness* for his firstborn. 11 In that day shall there be a great *mourning* in *Jerusalem*, as the *mourning* of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.

Notice that there is no Scripture implying that the 144,000 will evangelize the world as is commonly taught. Only *after* they are “redeemed from the earth” as “the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb” do we see them “follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.”³¹ The purpose of the 144,000 is to serve as an all-male choir (Rev 14:3) in the Millennium. Many Jewish females likewise enter the Millennium unglorified. The phrase “and their wives apart” is used five times to describe them (Zech 12:12-14).

We must also take careful note that the mourning of the Jews is the result of God pouring upon them “the spirit of grace and of supplications” (Zech 12:10), thus signifying God’s gifts of mercy and salvation in triumph over the wages of justice and condemnation.

Not only do the Jews mourn, but also “all kindreds of the earth.” Jesus mentioned this future scene as well:

And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the *tribes* of the earth *mourn*, and *they shall see the Son of man* coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. (Matt 24:30)

Of course, all mourning does not lead to repentance unto God. Prisons hold millions in mourning merely that they have been caught, yet not truly sorrowful for their sins. Yet, God ties the concept of *mourning* specifically in the context of the Day of the Lord to *turning unto* the Lord:

... for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it? Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. (Joel 2:11-13)

Zechariah goes on to mention “every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem” (Zec 14:16), showing that there are indeed Gentile survivors after the Day of the Lord. However, we know these survivors do not fight in the final battle (although they could be relatives of the soldiers) nor do they receive the mark of the beast (and thus may be largely composed of devout Muslims who strictly adhere to Leviticus 19:28).

The word “then” (Strong’s #5119) is used in Matt 24:29-31, Mark 13:24-27, and Luke 21:25-

³¹ Rev 14:3-4 ...no man could learn that song but **the hundred and forty and four thousand**, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.

27. Strong defines it as “the when, that is, at the time that (of the past or future, also in consecution): - that time, then”. As mentioned earlier, today we might simply say “concurrently” as opposed to “then” (Strong’s #1899) which means “thereafter” as in a sequence of events.

As we can see in the following harmony, Matthew chronologically links in one moment the *celestial signs* to the *sign* of the son of man *in heaven* and the *tribes of the earth mourning*. Mark and Luke link the *celestial signs* to the actual sight of the *coming* of the Son of man in *the clouds*. Luke specifies *a cloud*. Mark links the *coming* to the sending of the *angels*. Matthew links the *angels* to *a trumpet* sounding when we are gathered and changed in the Resurrection-Rapture (1 Cor 15:51-52).

EVENT	Matthew 24	Mark 13	Luke 21
Celestial Signs	²⁹ <i>Immediately after the tribulation of those days</i> shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:	²⁴ But in those days, <i>after that tribulation</i> , the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, ²⁵ And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken.	²⁵ And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; ²⁶ Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.
“Sign of” the Son of Man / Tribes Mourn	³⁰ And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn,		
Second Coming	and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.	²⁶ And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.	²⁷ And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.
Angels Sent	³¹ And he shall send his angels	²⁷ And then shall he send his angels,	
Trumpet Sounds	with a great sound of a trumpet,		
Gathering	and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.	and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.	

Thus, all of these events, beginning with the shaking of the heavenly powers *after* the Tribulation, happen in the same singular moment or twinkling of an eye. This is very important because, if any citizens of the tribes of the earth (Jew or Gentile) repent even one microsecond *before* the final deadline, then they would simply become part of the elect who are alive and remain and would be glorified at the Resurrection. On the other hand, if they mourn yet do not repent until perhaps one microsecond *after* the final deadline and yet enter the Millennium alive, the fate of the five foolish virgins (Matt 25:11-13) has no urgent or genuine meaning. However, as we have seen, at *the exact same moment* that many souls of “the tribes of the earth” (including many of “they also which pierced him”) are to receive the gift of eternal life yet remain *unglorified*, we simultaneously shall see the previously-saved “elect” (both living and sleeping) *glorified*.

OBJECTION 3 – THE REWARDING OF THE 24 ELDERS

Some argue that the 24 elders are wearing crowns in Revelation 4 and 5, before the first seal is broken, and that since crowns are rewards, that they and millions of other saints have been rewarded and therefore must have seen a pre-Trib Rapture.

This viewpoint is very easily refuted by noting that these same 24 elders later declare that the time they are rewarded is at the 7th Trumpet in Revelation 11:18. Moreover, in Matthew 16:27, Jesus made it clear that only at the time that “the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels” that “he shall reward every man according to his works.” There is no concept that the wearing of crowns necessitates a glorified body, nor is there any reference to rewarding in Rev 4-5, nor is there absolutely any truth to the idea that saints in Paradise require a Rapture to get there.

Notice that the 24 elders are indeed human for they sing that the Lamb “hast redeemed us to God by thy blood” (Rev 5:9 KJV), whereas almost all modern versions errantly remove the word “us” and insert “people”. Also, in 5:10, “us” is often errantly replaced with “them”, and “we” is often errantly replaced with “they”. But this red herring is of no relevance to the question of when the 24 elders are rewarded.

OBJECTION 4 – THE PARABLE OF THE FAITHFUL SERVANTS

Occasionally one will hear that the parable of Luke 12:35-48 suggests a lord returning from “the wedding” means that the marriage supper of the Lamb has taken place, but there is no chronological data here other than perhaps verse 39 which mentions the advent of the *thief*, which is a post-tribulational event.

DEATH TO BE DESTROYED

Let us not forget that the story has a happy ending, and it is the *best possible* ending!

But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's *at his coming*. Then cometh *the end*, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and

power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. (1 Cor 15:23-26)

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. (Rev 21:3-4)

CONCLUSION

If the reader has merely skimmed this article in a rapid course to find this Conclusion section, perhaps wisdom would suggest saving this file and, Lord willing, reading it more carefully if time permits.

Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour is humility. He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him. (Pro 18:12-13)

This paper is highly critical of the type of rapture theology that is taught in many churches today and described in the best-selling "Left Behind" series of novels by Christian authors Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins. Many other men of God also teach against the Resurrection-Rapture, including Chuck Missler, Jack Van Impe, Thomas Ice, and Hal Lindsey.

Former pre-tribulationists Pat Robertson and Kent Hovind many others now support post-tribulation doctrine.

Proven in this article are the following points (among others):

- The Resurrection of the Just occurs within a single moment, not in a succession of phases requiring more than one moment.
- There will be two resurrections of men, the "first" of which includes Tribulation saints who are described as victorious over the beast, his image and his mark. The only other resurrection mentioned includes "the rest of the dead" which occurs 1000 years later. Logically, there is no resurrection previous to the "first", hence no rapture previous to the end of the Tribulation.
- Jesus states four times that this first eschatological raising occurs "at the last day". Thus, the nearly simultaneous Rapture occurs "at the last day" as well.
- Saints are not appointed to God's wrath, but rather to tribulation (persecution by men).
- God's wrath does not begin until the 24 elders declare so at the Seventh and Last Trumpet. At this time, seven angels pour out the seven vials of God's wrath on the Day of the Lord. Babylon and the armies of Armageddon are destroyed this same day.
- At the Last Trump, the saints are gathered, rewarded and enter their rest. This is on the Last Day at the end of the world or present evil age.

- Jesus taught by parable and prayer that living saints are to remain on Earth under God's keeping until separated from the world at the Last Day.
- Jesus also taught of a single (not multiple) gathering of his elect which is to take place only after the Tribulation. Paul cited this teaching of Jesus in reference to the Rapture.

Only the post-tribulation rapture on the Day of the Lord has any direct Scripture to support it, and most pre-tribulationists, mid-tribulationists, and pre-wrathists will admit this. Could there *also* be a secret rapture which happens prior to the Day of the Lord? Perhaps as a raising only (not a resurrection), but such would be mere conjecture along the lines of whether space aliens exist or other questions where Scripture is silent.

Anti-post-tribulationists have had about 200 years to find a verse to support their theory, yet have failed to do so. Doctrine should be formed by faith which comes by hearing the word of God,

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.
(Romans 10:17)

See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.
(Eph 5:15-17)

I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. (2 Tim 4:1-4)