



# Let Both Grow

SOLID REASONS WHY THE RAPTURE WILL  
TAKE PLACE AFTER THE TRIBULATION

By [LetBothGrow.com](http://LetBothGrow.com)

# 1. Introduction

These papers have been written to demonstrate that the resurrection and rapture of believers in Christ will take place after the future time of tribulation, which the Bible describes. Each section deals with a different aspect of Christ's return or an issue relating to it.

These papers have been written from a layman's perspective. There are quality teachers and theologians who disagree with one another on this subject, so we must look to the Scriptures themselves, for clarification. These papers are not intended to take away our cherished hope in the rapture, but to help our hope endure to the end.

While the time of tribulation is not something to be desired, one thing worse than merely going through the tribulation, would be getting caught off guard by it. A person, who believed that God had promised to take believers out of the world before the tribulation, could become disillusioned and offended, if it ever became clear that the tribulation was upon us, and we were still here.

Some could be slow to react to current events, in whatever way is appropriate, because they are convinced that the tribulation cannot begin, until after believers have been removed from the earth.

The Scriptures, Jesus, and the apostles used several terms, when discussing prophecy. These papers will look at how some of these terms were used and what was meant by them.

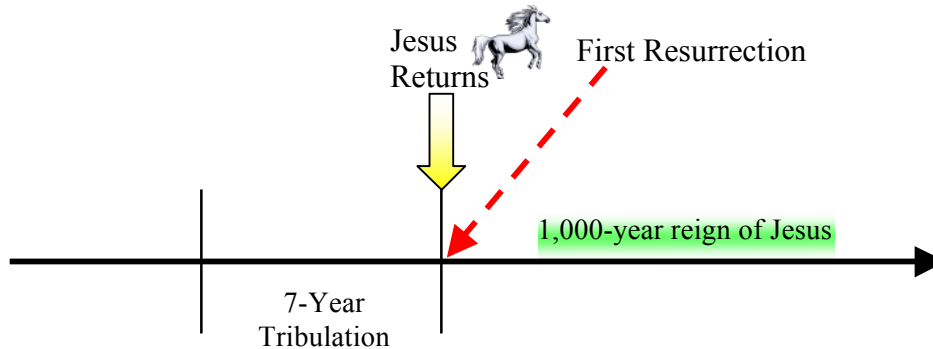
Even if, after studying this topic, the reader is not convinced that the rapture will take place after the tribulation, that's fine. Just knowing there's a possibility we *might* go through the tribulation, would be enough to keep us from stumbling, if it ever became evident that we would need to endure it.

Either way, the Bible clearly teaches that Christ will return to rescue us. The only thing up for discussion is the general timing of our rescue—whether it be before or after the tribulation? Believers are united in the person of Christ. The timing of Christ's return is a side issue, but it only becomes more relevant with each passing year.

**Note:** In these papers, the tribulation is diagramed as 7 years, but Jesus only used the word "tribulation" to describe the last 3 ½ years. He said that there would be "great tribulation" after the abomination of desolation is set up. Daniel said that this would take place "in the middle of the week." There is disagreement over how bad the first 3 ½ years will be, but the final 3 ½ years will definitely be the worst.

## 2. The First Resurrection

According to Revelation 19:11-20:6, it is after Christ returns on the white horse and defeats the beast, the false prophet, the kings of the earth and their armies, and Satan that the first resurrection takes place.



According to the Apostle Paul in First Thessalonians 4:15, living believers “will by no means precede those who are asleep.” Because the first resurrection does not take place until after the tribulation, that means the rapture cannot take place until after the tribulation. Living believers will not be caught up into the air to meet Jesus in the clouds until the dead in Christ are raised.

In Acts 26:23, Paul said that Jesus was “the first to rise from the dead.” That means that Christ is the firstfruits of a future resurrection-harvest. As the firstfruits, Jesus is connected to the rest of the harvest, so it’s not a contradiction to call the resurrection at His coming “the first resurrection.” The firstfruits ripen early and are consecrated to the Lord.

### **1 Corinthians 15 NKJV™**

<sup>20</sup> But now Christ is risen from the dead, *and has become the firstfruits* of those who have fallen asleep.

### **Romans 11 NKJV™**

<sup>16</sup> For *if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy*; and if the root is holy, so are the branches.

### **1 Corinthians 15 NKJV™**

<sup>23</sup> But each one in his own order: *Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ’s* at His coming.

Jesus was the first individual to be truly resurrected, but Revelation 20 is describing the resurrection of those who belong to Him. It’s one thing to say that Jesus, as the firstfruits, is part of the first resurrection; it’s another thing to say that millions, perhaps billions of believers could be resurrected seven years before “the first resurrection” takes place. It would no longer be the first.

Jesus and Paul taught that there would be a resurrection of the just and unjust (the resurrection of life and the resurrection of condemnation).

**Luke 14 NKJV™**

<sup>14</sup> And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.”

**John 5 NKJV™**

<sup>28</sup> Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice <sup>29</sup> and come forth— those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

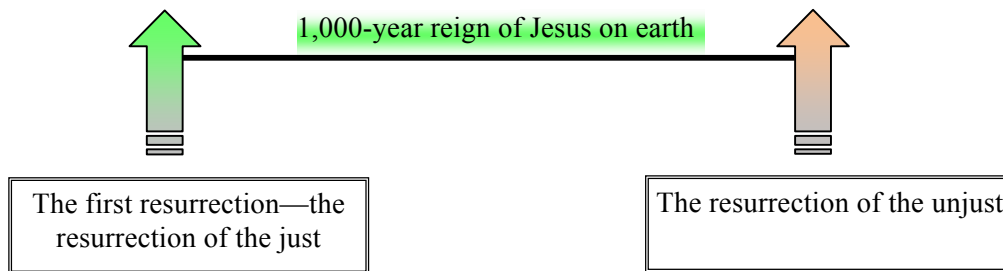
**Acts 24 NKJV™**

<sup>15</sup> I [Paul] have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of *the* dead, both of *the* just and *the* unjust.

According to Jesus and the Apostle John, there will be two resurrections, the resurrection of the just and the unjust. The resurrection of the just and the resurrection of the unjust will be separated by the thousand-year reign of Christ.

**Revelation 20 4b-6a NKJV™**

<sup>4</sup> Then *I* saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received *his* mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. <sup>5</sup> But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This *is* the first resurrection. <sup>6</sup> Blessed and holy *is* he who has part in the first resurrection.



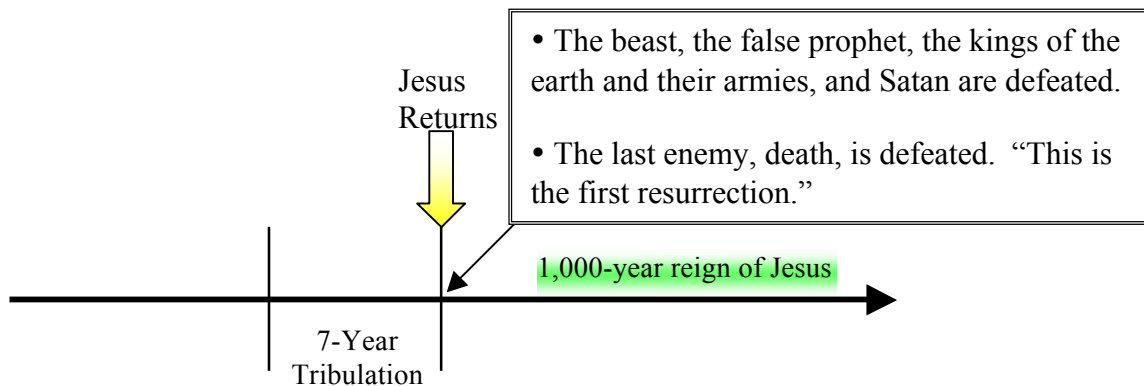
According to the Apostle John, the first resurrection takes place after Christ returns on the white horse and defeats His enemies. He also said that the next resurrection wouldn't take place for a thousand years. John agrees with Jesus: there will be two resurrections.

According to the Apostle Paul in First Corinthians 15:26, death will be the last enemy to be destroyed. According to First Corinthians 15:54, death will be defeated (swallowed up in victory) when dead believers are raised and living believers are glorified.

This is exactly what we see in Revelation 19 and 20. Christ returns on the white horse and defeats the beast, the false prophet, the kings of the earth and their armies, and Satan. Next, the dead are raised. Death is the last enemy to be defeated. The Apostle John says, "This is the first resurrection." The next resurrection won't come for a thousand years, "the resurrection of condemnation."

### 3. The Last Enemy

According to the Apostle Paul, the last enemy to be destroyed will be death, and he said that death will be defeated when the dead in Christ are raised, and we who are living are changed. That places the resurrection of the dead in Christ and the glorification of living believers sometime after the tribulation—after Christ’s other enemies have been defeated. This harmonizes perfectly with Revelation 19:11-20:6, which says that the first resurrection takes place after Jesus returns on the white horse and defeats the beast, the false prophet, the kings of the earth and their armies, and Satan. Because the first resurrection takes place after the tribulation, that means there wasn’t another resurrection seven years earlier.



From the time Jesus ascended into heaven, He has been waiting for His enemies to be made His footstool—subjected to Him and defeated.

#### Hebrews 10 NKJV™

<sup>12</sup> But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, <sup>13</sup> from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool.

When Jesus returns, there will be enemies He must defeat. After the Messiah sits at the Father’s right hand, He returns to Zion and rules in the midst of His enemies.

#### Psalms 110 NKJV™

<sup>1</sup> The LORD said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”

<sup>2</sup> The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies!

#### 1. Corinthians 15:22-27 NKJV™

<sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. <sup>23</sup> But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those *who are* Christ’s at His coming. <sup>24</sup> Then *comes* the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. <sup>25</sup> For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. <sup>26</sup> The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.

With so many enemies arrayed against Him, Jesus can destroy them in any order He chooses, and He has chosen to defeat death last. When is death defeated? What signifies

its defeat? The glorification of our bodies is part of Christ’s subduing all things to Himself.

**Philippians 3 NKJV™**

<sup>20</sup> For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup> who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

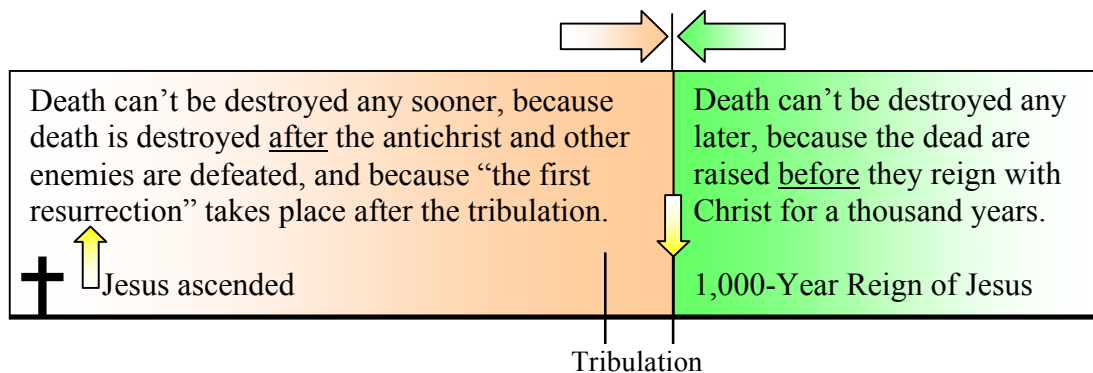
Paul said that death will be defeated (swallowed up in victory) when the dead in Christ are raised and we who are alive are changed (glorified). Because death is the last enemy to be defeated, this must take place sometime after the beast, the false prophet, kings of the earth and their armies, and Satan are defeated.

**1 Corinthians 15:51-55 NKJV™**

<sup>51</sup> Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— <sup>52</sup> 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. <sup>53</sup> For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. <sup>54</sup> So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.”

<sup>55</sup> *“O Death, where is your sting?  
O Hades, where is your victory?”*

The dead in Christ and living believers will be made incorruptible and immortal. When that happens, death has been swallowed up in victory. Death, the last enemy, has been defeated. This doesn’t mean that no one will ever die again, or that there will never again be enemies. After the thousand years are finished, Satan will be released and lead a rebellion; those who join him will be consumed by fire. But at the beginning of the millennium, Christ will defeat all the enemies of God, with death being the last one.

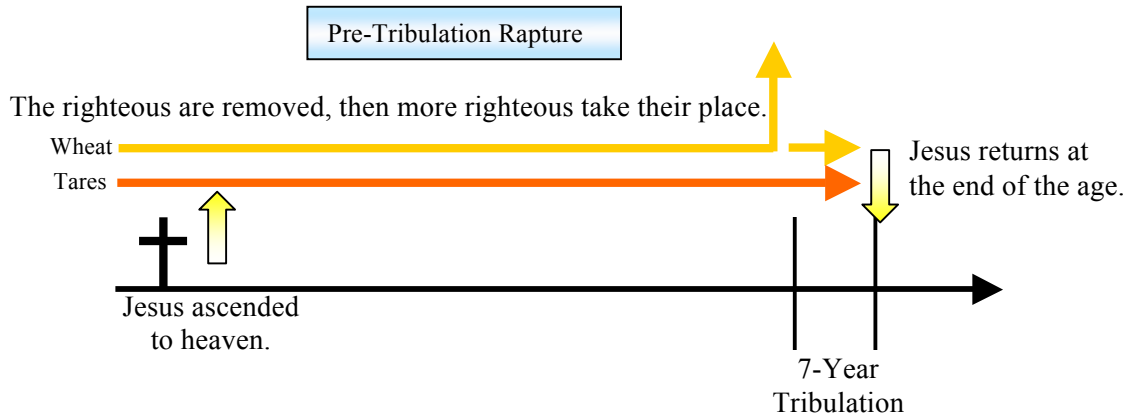


According to the Apostle Paul, the last enemy to be defeated will be death itself (not the antichrist). He said that death would be defeated when the dead in Christ are raised and living believers are changed. That’s when the saying will be fulfilled, “Death is swallowed up in victory.” We will then be caught up to meet Jesus in the clouds.

## 4. The Wheat and the Tares

When Jesus told the parable of the wheat and the tares, He said that the wheat and the tares (the righteous and the wicked) would grow together in the world until the end of the age. If the rapture were to come before the tribulation, that would mean the wheat and the tares would not grow together until the end of the age.

A rapture before the tribulation would mean that the righteous would be removed from the world (the field) seven years before the wicked were removed. However, the gospels and the book of Revelation make it clear that believers in Jesus will be living in the world during the tribulation. The pre-tribulation view accounts for this by saying that new believers will take the place of those that were removed from the world before the tribulation began.



The problem with this scenario is that it does not faithfully represent Jesus' words, "together until."

### **Matthew 13 NKJV™**

<sup>27</sup> So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' <sup>28</sup> He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?' <sup>29</sup> But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. <sup>30</sup> Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."

<sup>37</sup> He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup> The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked *one*. <sup>39</sup> The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. <sup>40</sup> Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. <sup>41</sup> The Son of Man

will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, <sup>42</sup> and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. <sup>43</sup> Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

Because the main point of the parable is that the wheat (the sons of the kingdom) and the tares (the sons of the wicked one) will both grow together in the field until the harvest (the end of the age), it's important to understand who the sons of the kingdom are and when the end of the age is.

## **The Kingdom of God**

Note: The “kingdom of heaven” and the “kingdom of God” are the same thing. Jews in the first century avoided using the word “God” out of reverence. This is why the prodigal son said that he had “sinned against heaven.” Matthew used the Jewish term “kingdom of heaven,” but Mark, Luke, and John probably did not want gentile readers to misunderstand, so they used the term “kingdom of God.”

The wheat is called, “the sons of the kingdom.” Does this mean that Jesus is speaking of the Jewish people only? In the biblical world of Jesus, a son bears the image and characteristics of his father. To be a son of the kingdom is to bear the image and characteristics of the kingdom. This is why Barnabas was called the son of encouragement.

In Matthew 21:43, Jesus said, “Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.” This means that the kingdom of God will no longer be made up exclusively of Israelites and those gentiles who have joined Israel by proselyte conversion. The kingdom of God will be made up of all peoples, whether Jew or Gentile. He says that the kingdom of God will be given to those who are actually bearing the fruits of it.

### **Matthew 7**

<sup>21</sup> “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.”

Paul said that we who believe in Jesus have been transferred from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of the Son.

### **Colossians 1**

<sup>12</sup> giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. <sup>13</sup> He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,



Just four verses after Jesus finished explaining the parable of the wheat and the tares, He told a very similar parable about the kingdom of heaven, and compared it to fishing with a net—harvesting fish instead of harvesting wheat.

### **Matthew 13**

<sup>47</sup> “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, <sup>48</sup> which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away. <sup>49</sup> So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, <sup>50</sup> and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

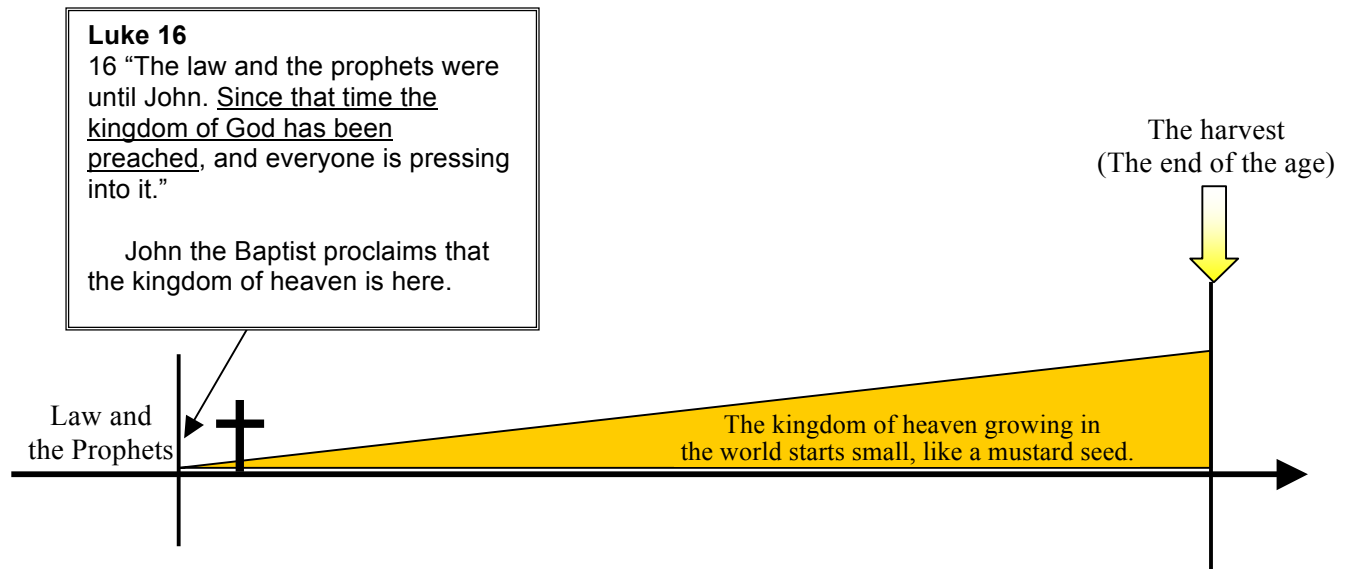
Just like the field (which represented the world) the sea has all kinds of creatures in it, some good and some bad. Some were clean and fit for eating (fish with scales); others were unclean and unfit for eating (scavengers). Jesus said they represented “the wicked” and “the just.”

Just as in the parable of the wheat and the tares, the separation of the righteous and the wicked does not happen until “the end of the age.” The wicked will be punished, but the righteous will be rewarded. We who believe in Jesus have been made righteous. We are the sons of the kingdom. We are, “bearing the fruits of” the kingdom of God.

### **1 Corinthians 6**

<sup>9</sup> Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, <sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>11</sup> And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

Both Jesus and John the Baptist began their ministries proclaiming that the kingdom of heaven was at hand—in other words, God’s ruling and reigning had arrived. John may have announced this sometime around 29 A.D. (give or take a few years). Jesus was the sower who went out sowing, spreading the “word of the kingdom.” Both the wheat and the tares have been growing together in the field (the world), and we are moving towards the harvest (the end of the age).



When Jesus said to repent, because God’s kingship was here, He was saying in effect that God’s ruling and reigning were breaking into the world, and that those who submitted to Him as King would be set free. He wasn’t referring only to a future event, but also to a present reality. The good news about the kingdom was that Jesus the King was here, and He was destroying the works of the devil. His miracles demonstrated that the kingdom of God had arrived, and it had arrived with power.

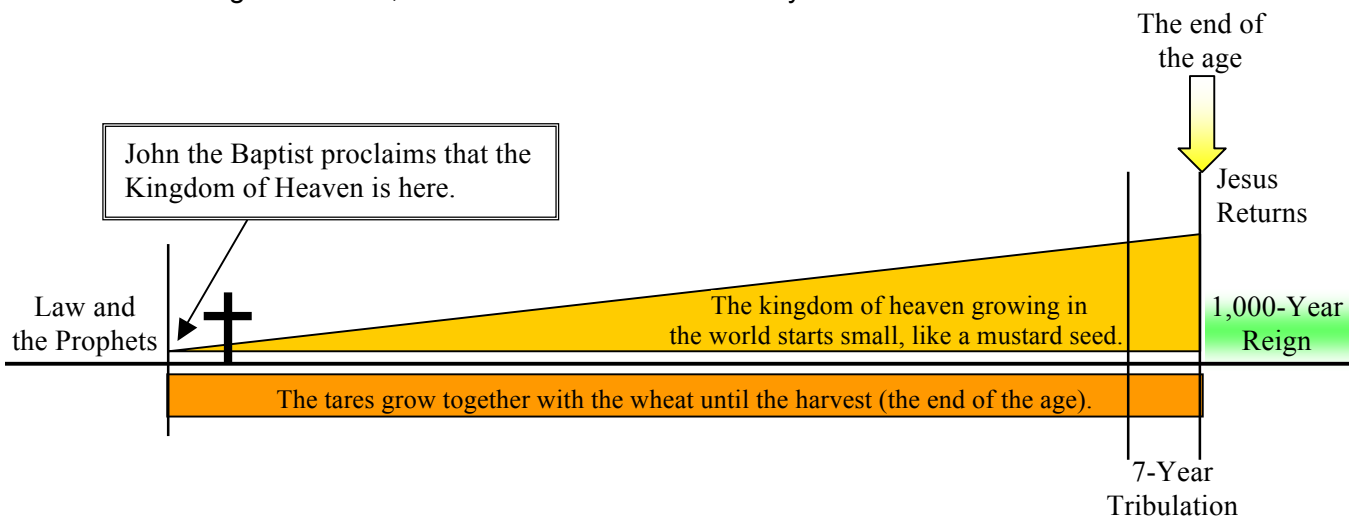
**Luke 11**

<sup>20</sup> But if I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.

As Jesus spread the “word of the kingdom,” many believed, but they were a fraction of the number of believers there are today. The kingdom (Jesus’ movement) begins small, like a mustard seed, but it grows large and provides shelter.

**Mark 4**

<sup>30</sup> Then He said, “To what shall we liken the kingdom of God? Or with what parable shall we picture it? <sup>31</sup> It is like a mustard seed which, when it is sown on the ground, is smaller than all the seeds on earth; <sup>32</sup> but when it is sown, it grows up and becomes greater than all herbs, and shoots out large branches, so that the birds of the air may nest under its shade.”



Although today, we might not always talk in terms of “the kingdom of God,” the message did not end when Jesus ascended to heaven. Remember Paul said that God has conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love. Colossians 1:13

### Acts 8

<sup>12</sup> But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.

### Acts 20

<sup>25</sup> “And indeed, now I [Paul] know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more.

### Acts 28

<sup>30</sup> Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, <sup>31</sup> preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.

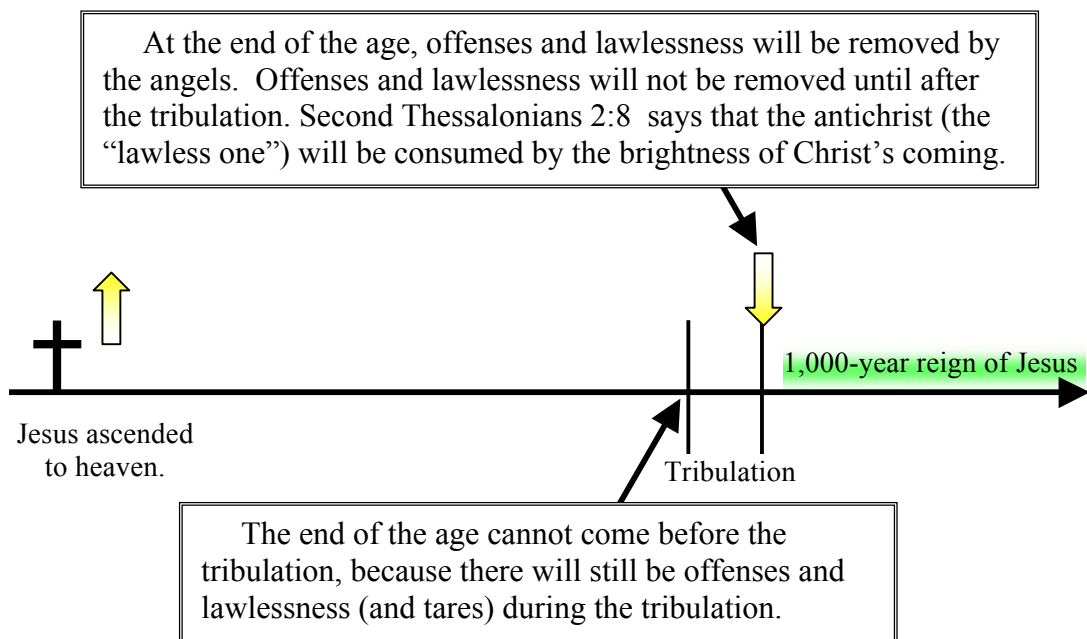
The kingdom of God (God’s ruling and reigning in our lives) includes such things as righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

### Romans 14

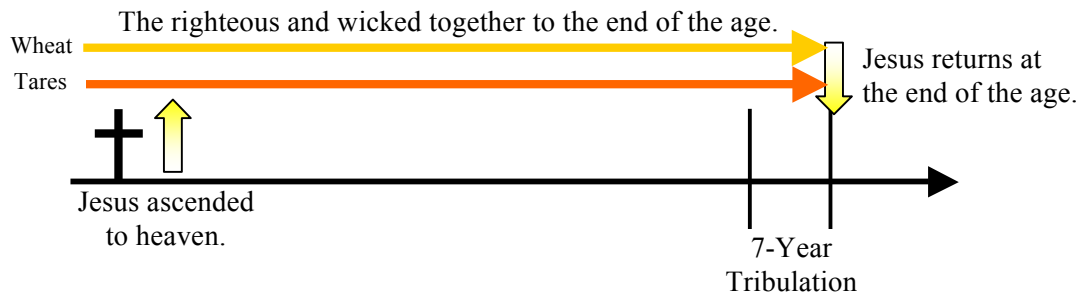
<sup>17</sup> for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. <sup>18</sup> For he who serves Christ in these things is acceptable to God and approved by men.

## The End of the Age

In the gospels, Jesus spoke about two ages: this age, and the age to come. The apostles and writers of the New Testament used the same terminology as well. Paul called this age, “this present evil age.” According to the parable of the wheat and the tares, the tares will be removed by the angels at the end of the age. As long as the wicked are in the world, we know that the end of the age has not yet arrived.



How could all the wheat be removed from the field (the world) seven years before the harvest (the end of the age)? We don't know if it will be millions of wheat or billions of wheat, but it will be *all* of the wheat. If the rapture were to come before the tribulation, the tares would be left alone in the world at that moment. How could that faithfully represent Jesus' words, "let both grow together until the harvest," (the end of the age) and the fact that even at the harvest, He commands the angels to gather the tares first? Both grow together in the world until the end, and it is the tares who are gathered first, not the wheat.



If the rapture were to come before the tribulation, that would mean the wheat and the tares (the righteous and the wicked) would not grow together until the end of the age, even though Jesus commands that they both stay in the world together until the end.

The tares aren't the only ones who will be with us until the end of the age.

**Matthew 28:20b** NKJV™

"Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

If the concept of the wheat and the tares staying together, without interruption, until the end of the age doesn't harmonize with our understanding of prophecy, it could be tempting to try to explain it away; however, we would be doing ourselves a disservice, because Jesus said that He too would be with us until the end of the age.

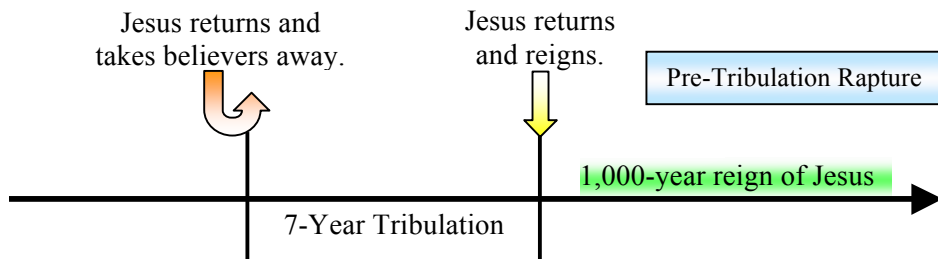
If it could be said that we won't really stay in the world with the wicked until the end, what would that say about Jesus' promise to be with us until the end? Both Jesus and the wicked will be with us until the end of this present evil age. The one promise is just as sure as the other. The righteous and the wicked won't just be together *at* the end, they will be together *until* the end. Jesus will also be with us until the end.

## 5. Rest “When”

**Question:** “When” will the persecuted church receive rest from its afflictions?

**Answer:** At Christ’s return.

However, will there be more than one future return of Christ?



When a rapture before the tribulation is explained, it is said that Jesus will come and take us to heaven before the tribulation and then come back to judge the world (riding on the white horse) after the tribulation. When will the persecuted church receive rest from its afflictions? Will it be before or after the tribulation? Paul answered this question in Second Thessalonians.

### **2 Thessalonians NKJV™**

<sup>4</sup> so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure, <sup>5</sup> which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer; <sup>6</sup> since *it is* a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, <sup>7</sup> and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, <sup>8</sup> in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup> These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, <sup>10</sup> when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.

<sup>11</sup> Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of *His* goodness and the work of faith with power,

In Second Thessalonians 1:4-11, Paul said that the persecuted church would receive rest “when” Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on the wicked. However, if the rapture were to come before the tribulation, the church would receive rest seven years before Jesus is revealed with His angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance. Paul’s description corresponds perfectly with the parable of the wheat and the tares. Jesus taught that the righteous and the wicked (the wheat and the tares) would grow together in the world until the end of the age, when Jesus would

send His angels to first remove the wicked to “the furnace of fire.” Naturally, the wheat would receive rest from any persecution, which the tares had been inflicting.

In Second Thessalonians, Paul is not only describing the same thing Jesus taught, but he is also referring to the Scriptures. His description of Jesus coming with the angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on the wicked, but giving rest to the righteous, is strikingly similar to Isaiah 66. In First Chronicles 28:18, cherubim are referred to as a chariot.

**Isaiah 66 NKJV™**

- <sup>14</sup> When you see *this*, your heart shall rejoice,  
And your bones shall flourish like grass;  
The hand of the LORD shall be known to His servants,  
And *His* indignation to His enemies.
- <sup>15</sup> For behold, the LORD will come with fire  
And with His chariots, like a whirlwind,  
To render His anger with fury,  
And His rebuke with flames of fire.
- <sup>16</sup> For by fire and by His sword  
The LORD will judge all flesh;  
And the slain of the LORD shall be many.

God’s servants will be blessed. His enemies will receive indignation.

Paul didn’t say that we would receive our rest seven years before these things take place. He said that we would receive rest and relief “when” these things take place. Second Thessalonians is not the only place where Paul described the righteous and the wicked receiving their just rewards at the same time. In Romans 2:5-7, Paul said that the righteous and the wicked would both receive their just rewards in the day of wrath. That’s because it’s not only the day of wrath; it’s also the day of God’s righteous judgment. Paul said that, in the day of wrath, the righteous would receive “eternal life,” but the wicked would receive “indignation and wrath.”

We will not be rescued seven years *before* Christ and the angels come in flaming fire, taking vengeance on the wicked, because that is the very day Paul says we will receive rest from our afflictions. Although it will be a day of wrath, it will also be the day of God’s righteous judgment, and we have nothing to fear from God, because we are on the right side of the judgment.

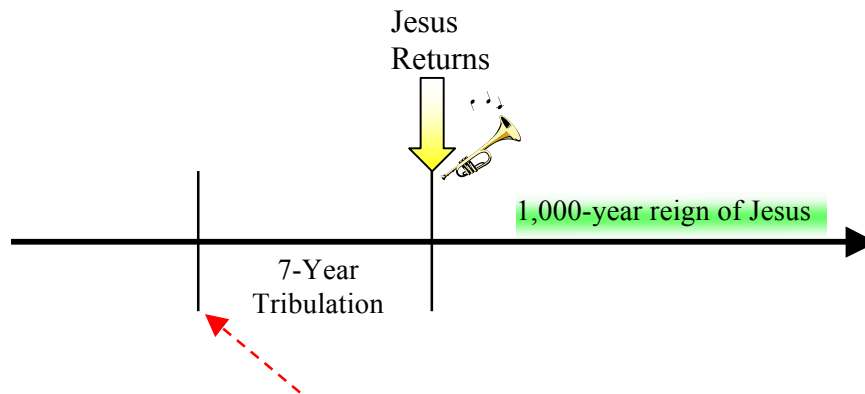
According to Paul, God will give the persecuted church relief from its afflictions by coming with the angels and taking vengeance on the wicked, who will “pay the penalty of eternal destruction” when He comes in that day. There’s only one place in the big picture of future events that fits Paul’s description, and that’s Christ’s return after the tribulation.

**2 Thessalonians 1:6-8 (NASB®)**

For after all it is *only* just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

## 6. The Last Trumpet

Jesus said that after the tribulation, He would send out His angels with the sound of a trumpet to gather His elect from one end of the earth to the other. Paul, writing over 20 years later, also mentioned a trumpet accompanying the Lord's return and His gathering of believers. Paul called it "the last trumpet."



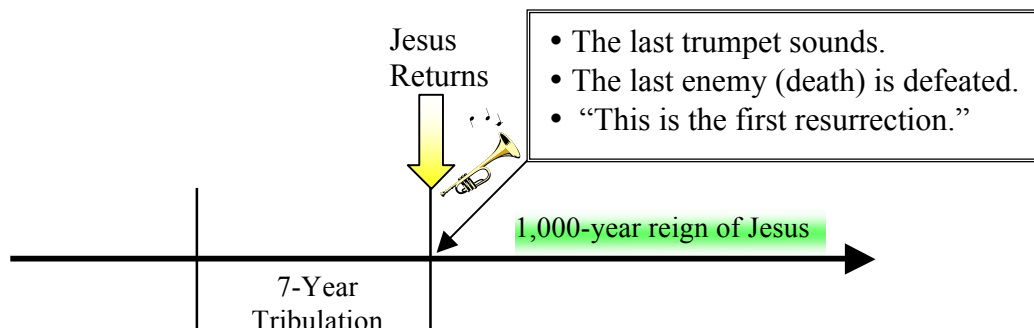
However, when a rapture before the tribulation is explained, it is said that what Paul wrote is describing events that take place seven years before what Jesus described. One consequence of that interpretation would be that the tribulation would more or less begin and end with Jesus descending from heaven with the sound of a trumpet, but that the trumpet before the tribulation would be called "the last trumpet."

The trumpet of God is related to His conquering the nations and defeating His enemies in the day of the Lord. Jesus said that the coming of the Son of Man would be like lightning in the sky. A few sentences later, He said that after the tribulation, He would send out His angels, "with a great sound of a trumpet" (Matthew 24:27-31). This had already been prophesied by Zechariah.

### **Zechariah 9 NKJV™**

<sup>14</sup> Then the LORD will be seen over them,  
And His arrow will go forth like lightning.  
The Lord GOD will blow the trumpet,  
And go with whirlwinds from the south.

Because Paul says that the dead in Christ will be raised at the last trumpet, the trumpet he's describing could not come before the first resurrection or before Christ's other enemies have been destroyed.



Paul agreed with Jesus:

- Jesus said that He would return in the clouds of the sky. Paul said that is where we would meet Him (in the clouds).
- Jesus said that He would send out His angels with a trumpet blast. Paul said the trumpet of God would sound.
- Jesus said that He would send the angels to gather the elect. Paul said that we would be caught up together (gathered) with fellow believers and the dead in Christ who have been raised.

If we don't recognize that Paul is referring back to both Jesus and the Scriptures, when he mentions the trumpet of God, the shout of God, the Son coming in the clouds, the resurrection, and the gathering of believers, we will think these things happen on two separate occasions. Neither Jesus nor Paul runs through the full list of these prophetic events when they talk about Christ's return. All they need to do is mention a few of these elements for their audience to know that they are referring to the end times and the day of the Lord.

<b>The Prophets</b>	"And will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days."	"The sun and moon will grow dark."	"Turn to Me with all your heart... and with mourning."	"The Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven!"	"He shall cry out, yes, shout aloud"	"The LORD will come with fire and with His chariots..."	"The Lord of hosts will come down to fight for Mount Zion"	"The Lord GOD will blow the trumpet,"	"Together with my dead body they shall arise."	"He shall call... Gather My saints together to Me."
<b>Jesus</b>	"Immediately after the tribulation of those days."	"The sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light."	"Then all the tribes of earth will mourn."	"The Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven."		"He will send His angels"		"He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet,"		"They will gather together His elect"
<b>Paul</b>				"With them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air."	"With a shout"	"With the voice of an archangel"	"The Lord Himself will descend from heaven"	"With the trumpet of God."	"The dead in Christ will rise first."	"We... shall be caught up together with them in the clouds."

In addition to the similar wording, an indication that Jesus, Paul, and the Scriptures are referring to the same events, is that these things are so unusual. These are earth-shaking events.

Paul is saying in effect, that the dead in Christ will be raised and living believers will be changed when these prophetic events take place during the future day of the Lord, which had already been described by Jesus and the prophetic Scriptures. The trumpet of God and the shout of God take place during the day of the Lord, when Christ defeats the enemies of God.

When an interpretation duplicates such unusual events, it suggests that perhaps the connection between the apostles' statements, Jesus' teaching, and the prophetic Scriptures is not being recognized. The duplication is a warning sign. Paul is referring to the same trumpet that Jesus and the prophetic Scriptures described—the trumpet which sounds, "after the tribulation of those days."



## 7. The End

According to the parable of the wheat and the tares, the righteous and the wicked will live together in the world, until the end of the age. When is the end of the age? Jesus, and His disciples spoke of two ages: “this age” and “the age to come.” The age to come is the Messianic age (the millennium). Below are just a few examples of how they used these terms.

### **Matthew 12 NKJV™**

<sup>32</sup> Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.

### **Luke 18 NKJV™**

<sup>29</sup> So He said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or wife or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, <sup>30</sup> who shall not receive many times more in this present time, and in the age to come eternal life.”

The age to come will be a righteous age. For now, we are living in an evil age, right along with the wicked.

### **Galatians 1 NKJV™**

<sup>4</sup> who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,

Satan is the “god” of this age. Strictly speaking, this is not the church age. Paul called it, “this present evil age.” It’s more accurate to say that this is the “present evil age,” in which we find the church. The word “church” in Greek is “ecclesia,” which means those who have been called out for a special assembly. In the midst of this evil age, we have been called out to be different and bring glory to God.

### **2 Corinthians 4:3-4a NKJV™**

<sup>3</sup> But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,  
<sup>4</sup> whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe,

Paul wrote that Demas had forsaken him, because Demas loved this present age. The Greek word used is “aion,” which means age. What would be the harm in loving this present age, if it were the church age?

### **2 Timothy 4 NKJV™**

<sup>10</sup> for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica—Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia.

In First Corinthians 2:6-8, Paul said that the wisdom we speak is not the wisdom of this age. He also said that the rulers of this age crucified Jesus. If Satan is the god of this age, if people such as Herod and Pilate are the rulers of this age, if this is an evil age, if we should not love this age, how could this be the church age? This is the evil age in which the church exists. The age to come will be a righteous age.

In Matthew 24, the disciples asked Jesus what would be the signs of His coming and the end of the age. In His answer, Jesus referred to the end of the age simply as “the end.”

**Matthew 24 NKJV™**

<sup>13</sup> But he who endures to the end shall be saved. <sup>14</sup> And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

In Matthew 24, Jesus said that the one who endured to the end would be saved, and went on to describe His return, which would take place, “after the tribulation of those days.” Sometimes it is said that Christ’s statements in Matthew 24, about enduring to the end, don’t apply to the church. However, in the book of Revelation, Jesus told the church at Thyatira to keep His works “until the end.” The message to the church was essentially the same as His teaching in Matthew 24.

**Revelation 2 NKJV™**

<sup>25</sup> But hold fast what you have till I come. <sup>26</sup> And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations

Did Jesus mean one thing by “the end” in Matthew 24 and something different by “the end” in Revelation? “The end” is how Jesus and the apostles referred to the end of the age. Why would Jesus encourage the church to endure to the end, if the church won’t be on the earth until the end?

The Apostle Peter was present for Jesus’ teaching on the Mount of Olives, recorded in Matthew 24, where Jesus said that the one who endured to the end would be saved. What would lead us to believe that Peter had in mind anything other than what Jesus taught, when he wrote the following?

**1 Peter 1 NKJV™**

<sup>4</sup> to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup> who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

**Matthew 24 NKJV™**

<sup>13</sup> “But he who endures to the end shall be saved.”

Was Peter describing a totally different salvation than what Jesus described? The salvation Jesus was speaking of comes at the end of the age—after the tribulation. Was Peter talking about a different salvation that would come seven years before the salvation Jesus spoke of? Isn’t Peter just saying the same thing in his own words? Long after Jesus’ teaching on the Mount of Olives, Jesus and His apostles continued to teach that the church would need to wait until the end of the age for His return. And Jesus said that this return would take place “after the tribulation of those days.”

## 8. The Last Day

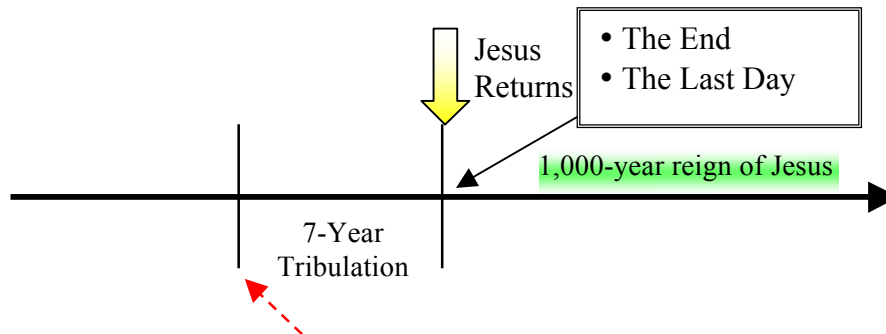
Jesus said that he would raise the one believing in Him, “at the last day.” When is, “the last day” when believers will be raised?

### John 6 NKJV™

<sup>39</sup> This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. <sup>40</sup> And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”

<sup>44</sup> No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

When discussing His coming and the end of the age, Jesus indicated that, “the end” would come after the tribulation. He said that the one who endured “to the end” would be saved (rescued). It makes sense that the last day would take place at the end. “The last day” can’t be the last day of all time, because after believers are resurrected, they will reign with Christ for a thousand years. If “the last day” is not the last day of all time, it must be the last day of this age. “The age to come” is the Messianic age—what we call the millennium. “The end” and “the last day” would appear to be referring to the same time—the last day of this present evil age.



However, if the rapture and resurrection were to take place before the tribulation, that would mean that believers in Jesus would be raised seven years before “the last day.” Either that, or it would mean that, “the last day” Jesus spoke about would come seven years before, “the end.” How could the last day come seven years before the end?

Jesus said that He would raise the one who believes in Him at the last day. Jesus also said that in the age to come, believers would be sons of the resurrection. Therefore, the resurrection at the last day must come sometime before the age to come.

Daniel was told that he would rest (in death) until, “the end,” but would arise (resurrected) at the end of the days. Because Daniel described the middle of the tribulation and the number of days from the middle to the end, we know that “the end” and resurrection he mentions come after the tribulation.

**Daniel 12 NKJV™**

<sup>13</sup> “But you, go *your way* till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days.

When Jesus mentioned, “the end” or, “the last day,” His audience knew exactly what He was referring to. They were familiar with these terms. They already knew there would be a resurrection at the last day (the end). What they did not know was that Jesus, whom they knew as “the prophet from Nazareth,” would be the One raising the dead. Job, perhaps the oldest book in the Bible, had already mentioned the resurrection at the last day.

**Job 19 NKJV™**

<sup>25</sup> For I know *that* my Redeemer lives,  
And He shall stand at last on the earth;  
<sup>26</sup> And after my skin is destroyed, this *I know*,  
That in my flesh I shall see God,

**Job 19 (NASB®)**

<sup>25</sup> “As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives,  
And at the last He will take His stand on the earth.

**Job 19 (King James Version)**

<sup>25</sup> For I know *that* my redeemer liveth,  
and *that* he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

Job knew that God his Redeemer would stand on the earth at the end—at the last day and that he (Job) would be resurrected. Job wasn’t saying, “at last,” the way we might say, “*Finally*, you got here.” He’s saying that these things will take place *at the last*, in the latter times, at the end—in other words, at the last day.

Jesus said that He would raise the one who believes in Him, “at the last day.” The last day can’t come before the tribulation, because, according to Job, the last day is when Jesus stands on the earth. Jesus will stand on the earth at the last day, and He will stand on the Mount of Olives during the day of the Lord.

The resurrection of the last day can’t come before the tribulation, because, according to the Apostle John, “the first resurrection” takes place after the tribulation—after Christ’s other enemies have been defeated. Job had already mentioned the resurrection that would take place at the last. Jesus wasn’t speaking these things in a vacuum; His statements didn’t come out of nowhere. He had come to the nation, which had preserved, studied, and memorized the book of Job. Jesus was citing biblical themes among a biblically literate people. Both Job (an Old Testament saint) and believers in Jesus will be raised at the last day. The last day is when Jesus stands on the earth, and His standing on the earth takes place after the tribulation.

## 9. Christ's Return Duplicated?

When Christ's supposed return before the tribulation is explained, there is a duplication of biblical events that takes place. The duplication of such unusual events is an indication that this interpretation may have missed the mark.

The first term to be affected by duplication is "the second coming." Hebrews 9:28 says that Jesus will appear, "a second time." If Jesus were coming back two more times, they would be His second and third comings. However, there is a reluctance to call Christ's return after the tribulation the third coming. Therefore, it is said that Christ's supposed return before the tribulation isn't really a "coming," because He comes in the air and does not return to the earth. However, New Testament authors used the word "coming." In Second Thessalonians, Paul wrote, "Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him..." Was Paul speaking of Christ's post-tribulation return, or His supposed return seven years earlier, which some say isn't really a "coming?"

Long before Paul, the Scriptures had already said that the Lord would descend from heaven with a shout, with the trumpet of God, bringing all the saints with Him, raise the righteous dead, and gather His saints together. These are things predicted to take place during the day of the Lord. Is. 26:19-21, 30:30, 31:4, 42:13, Joel 3:16, Zech. 9:14, 14:5, Ps. 50:2-5

If the connection between the Apostles' statements and both the teachings of Jesus and the rest of Scripture is not recognized, it results in a duplication of the events described.

- Two future returns of Christ
- Two shouts of God
- Two trumpets of God
- Two first resurrections
- Two gatherings of believers

Paul wrote that the Lord Himself would descend from heaven with a shout. The Scriptures had already described this taking place during the day of the Lord.

Isaiah 31:4 reads, "For thus the LORD has spoken to me: 'As a lion roars, and a young lion over his prey... so the LORD of hosts will come down to fight for Mount Zion and for its hill.'" NKJV™

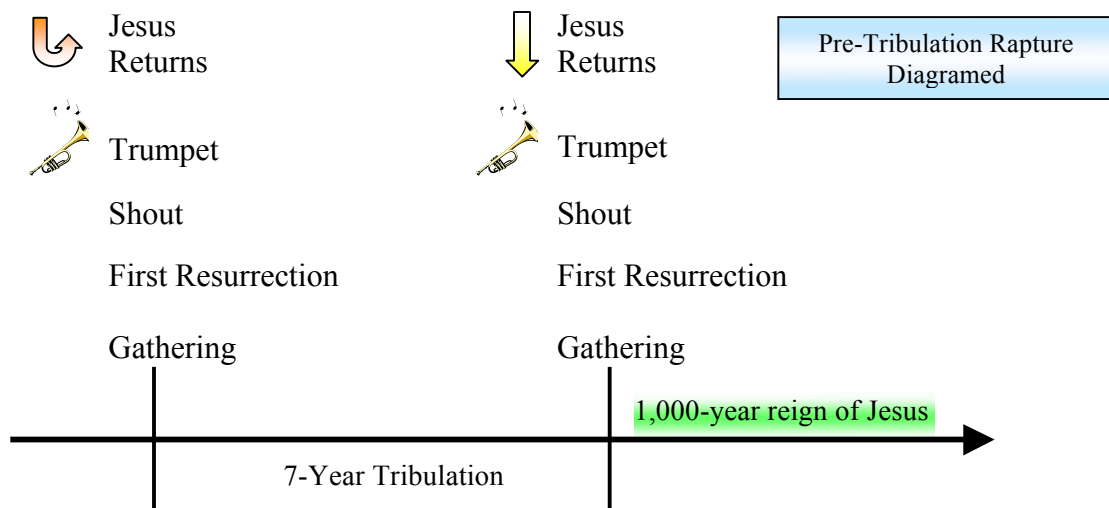
Isaiah 42:13a says, "The LORD shall go forth like a mighty man; He shall stir up *His* zeal like a man of war. He shall cry out, yes, shout aloud;" NKJV™

Paul wrote that the "trumpet of God" would sound at Christ's return, and that the dead in Christ would be raised at "the last trumpet." This agrees with what Jesus taught in Matthew 24. But in order to explain two future returns of Jesus, it is said that "the last trumpet" that Paul described comes seven years before the trumpet, which Jesus said would accompany His return "after the tribulation."

Zechariah 9:14 says, “Then the LORD will be seen over them, and His arrow will go forth like lightning. The Lord GOD will blow the trumpet, and go with whirlwinds from the south.” NKJV™

One of the more striking examples of the duplication, which results from accepting a return of Christ before the tribulation, is the issue of the first resurrection. After describing Christ returning on the white horse and defeating His enemies in Revelation 19, the Apostle John described “the first resurrection” taking place. However, in order for there to be another resurrection seven years earlier, this resurrection cannot actually be the first.

In order to solve this problem, it is sometimes said that both resurrections are the first. It is said that there is a resurrection before the tribulation, in addition to the resurrection after the tribulation, and that they are both the first.



This duplication of events even extends to Paul’s description of Christ’s return in First Thessalonians 4 and 5. When Jesus described His return in Matthew 24, which He specifically said would come “after the tribulation,” He said that He would come in the clouds, sound a trumpet, and gather His elect. Next, He warned about being unprepared, comparing it to drunkenness. He compared His coming to a thief’s, and told us to watch.

In First Thessalonians, Paul wrote that the Lord would descend from heaven, accompanied by the trumpet of God, and gather believers together to Himself in the clouds. He also mentioned some things which Jesus did not, such as the Lord’s shout. Next, he warned about being unprepared, saying the day would come like a thief. He mentioned drunkenness and told us to watch.

And yet, it is sometimes said that Paul was describing an entirely different return of Christ than the one Jesus described taking place “after the tribulation.” The duplication of these unusual, earth-shaking events is a warning sign that this interpretation may have taken a wrong turn, by failing to recognize that Paul was referring to the Scriptures and to Jesus.

## 10. Referencing the Scriptures

Jesus, the Apostles, and others in their community frequently referred to the Scriptures in their discussions. In the gospels, Jesus is continually alluding to the Scriptures. He was discussing biblical themes with a biblically literate people. In their culture, sometimes just a word or two conveyed a deeper, biblical meaning.

- After Jesus fed the five thousand, those who witnessed the miracle said, “This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world.” It’s a reference to what Moses said in Deuteronomy 18:15, “The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren.”
- When Jesus said, “Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,” it was an allusion to Exodus 33:14, in which God Himself says to Moses, “My Presence will go *with you*, and I will give you rest.”
- When Jesus said, “The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost,” it was an allusion to Ezekiel 34:16, in which God Himself says of His flock, “I will seek what was lost.”
- When Jesus said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM,” it was a reference to Exodus 3:14, where God told Moses to tell the Israelites that, “I AM has sent me to you.”
- On His way to the cross, Jesus told the crowd not to weep for Him but for themselves, saying, “Then they will begin *‘to say to the mountains, “Fall on us!” and to the hills, “Cover us!”*” For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?” He was quoting Hosea 10:8 and alluding to Ezekiel 20:45-21:5. God explained that the green trees are the righteous and the dry trees are the wicked. By the time of Jesus, the Messiah was referred to as “the Green Tree,” because the Messiah is *the* Righteous One. Jesus was saying that if this is how they treat the Green Tree (the Messiah), what will happen to the dry (the wicked).
- “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.” – Paul refers to Proverbs 25:22.
- John the Baptist asked Jesus if He was “the coming one.” It’s a reference to Zechariah 9:9, which says, “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you;” as well as to other passages such as Malachi 3:1-2, which speak of the Messiah’s coming.

We immediately recognize references to Scriptures that we’re familiar with. We’re usually more familiar with the New Testament. But in Jesus’ day, they were familiar with the Old Testament. If familiar phrases such as the following were inserted into a conversation or a teaching, we would understand the deeper meaning: “render to Caesar,” “cast the first stone,” “get thee behind me,” etc.

If a reporter asked a protester in Washington DC what a certain protest was about, and the protester said, "It's about we the people," we would know what the protester meant. Someone from another country might not understand. The protest is about the people? However, we understand that the protester is referring to the constitution.

Paul described several events surrounding Christ's return. These events had already been predicted by the Scriptures to accompany the day of the Lord. Paul was referring to the Scriptures. The Scriptures had already said that the Lord would descend from heaven with a shout, with the trumpet of God, bringing all the saints with Him, raise the righteous dead, and gather His saints together during the day of the Lord. Even God-fearing gentiles like Cornelius would have heard these Scriptures read in the synagogue.

**The Lord will descend from heaven with a shout:**

"As a lion roars, and a young lion over his prey...so the Lord of hosts will come down to fight for Mount Zion and for its hill." Isaiah 31:4 NKJV™

**The trumpet of God will sound:**

"Then the LORD will be seen over them, and His arrow will go forth like lightning. The Lord GOD will blow the trumpet..." Zechariah 9:14 NKJV™

**God will bring His saints with Him:**

"Thus the Lord my God will come, and all the saints with You." Zech. 14:5b NKJV™

**God will raise the righteous dead:**

"Your dead shall live; together with my dead body they shall arise. Awake and sing, you who dwell in dust; for your dew *is like* the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Isaiah 26:19 NKJV™

**The Lord will gather His saints together:**

"Our God shall come, and shall not keep silent; a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous all around Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people: 'Gather My saints together to Me, those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.'" Psalm 50:3-5 NKJV™

These prophetic passages, which talk about the trumpet of God and the shout of God, would have been as familiar to Paul as his writings are to us today. If there were a passage that specifically said that God would come down and defend Washington D.C., we'd remember it. By referencing these events, Paul was saying that these things will be accomplished by the Son. Although the early church would have been made up of people from all kinds of backgrounds, even former pagans, the elders and teachers in the churches would have been those who knew the Scriptures. The events Paul described accompanying Christ's return would have been familiar to them. They would have known what Paul was talking about.



# 11. Jesus & Paul

## Matthew 24:29-31 NKJV™

29 “Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

## Matthew 24:43-51 NKJV™

<sup>43</sup> But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.

<sup>44</sup> Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

<sup>45</sup> “Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? <sup>46</sup> Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. <sup>47</sup> Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. <sup>48</sup> But if that evil servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ <sup>49</sup> and begins to beat *his* fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, <sup>50</sup> the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for *him* and at an hour that he is not aware of, <sup>51</sup> and will cut him in two and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

(Earlier in Matthew 24)

## Matthew 24:21-22 NKJV™

<sup>21</sup> For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. <sup>22</sup> And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.

## Matthew 24:12-14 NKJV™

<sup>12</sup> And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. <sup>13</sup> But he who endures to the end shall be saved. <sup>14</sup> And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

## 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11 NKJV™

<sup>13</sup> But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. <sup>14</sup> For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

<sup>15</sup> For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. <sup>16</sup> 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. <sup>17</sup> 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. <sup>18</sup> Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**5** But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. <sup>2</sup> For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. <sup>3</sup> 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. <sup>4</sup> But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. <sup>5</sup> You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. <sup>6</sup> Therefore let us not sleep, as others *do*, but let us watch and be sober. <sup>7</sup> For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. <sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>10</sup> who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. <sup>11</sup> Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

Not only did Paul describe the same things Jesus described in Matthew 24, but he followed Jesus’ teaching so closely, that he may have deliberately patterned his statements after Jesus’ teaching. Even if he didn’t do it deliberately, the amount of overlap is significant, and it’s hard to imagine Paul did not have this very teaching of Jesus in mind as he wrote.

If Paul, in First Thessalonians 4, described the same coming of the Lord, which Jesus Himself described in Matthew 24, in which of his letters *did* Paul describe a different return—one that takes place seven years before the coming that Jesus described?

What if Jesus would have mentioned the shout? Could it still be said that Paul was describing an entirely different return of Christ than what Jesus Himself described in Matthew 24? Although Jesus did not mention the shout, it is described in the Scriptures. In His description, Jesus was referencing what had been written by Joel.

**Matthew 24 NKJV**  
<sup>29</sup> "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. <sup>30</sup> Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven,

**Joel 3 NKJV**  
<sup>15</sup> The sun and moon will grow dark, And the stars will diminish their brightness.  
<sup>16</sup> The LORD also will roar from Zion, And utter His voice from Jerusalem; The heavens and earth will shake;

We can also see above, that Jesus did not mention that the earth would be shaken, in addition to the heavens. To list every element would be cumbersome and detract from the point being made at the time. Jesus was citing biblical themes to a biblically literate audience and trusting them to fill in the gaps through their study of the Scriptures. The Scriptures, which Jesus alluded to, fill in the gaps or differences with Paul.

In the chart below, the last remaining difference between Jesus' account and Paul's account (after Christ's appearance in the sky) is that Jesus did not mention a resurrection that would accompany His return after the tribulation. But again, the Scriptures Jesus cited fill in the gap. In Matthew 24, Jesus related what He was saying to what had been written by the prophet Daniel.

**Matthew 24 NKJV™**

<sup>15</sup> "Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand),

**Daniel 12 NKJV™**

<sup>11</sup> "And from the time *that* the daily *sacrifice* is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, *there shall be* one thousand two hundred and ninety days. <sup>12</sup> *Blessed is* he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days.

<sup>13</sup> "But you, go *your way* till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days.

Jesus referenced Daniel and what he wrote about the abomination of desolation, and Daniel described his resurrection at the end of the days (measured from the abomination). Jesus steered us back to Daniel for more information about what He was talking about, and Daniel mentions the resurrection. The fact that Jesus did not mention the shout of God or the resurrection is not a true difference with Paul. The Scriptures, which Jesus cited mention these elements.

	↓		↓							
<b>Jesus</b>	"Immediately after the tribulation of those days."	"The sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light."	"Then all the tribes of earth will mourn."	"The sign of the Son of Man will appear in <u>heaven.</u> "	"The Son of Man coming on the <u>clouds</u> of heaven."	<b>The Shout</b> "The Lord also will roar from Zion," --Joel	"He will send His angels"	"He will send His angels with a great sound of a <u>trumpet.</u> "	<b>Resurrection</b> "Will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days." - Daniel	"They will <u>gather together</u> His elect"
<b>Paul</b>				"The Lord Himself will descend from <u>heaven</u> "	"With them in the <u>clouds</u> to meet the Lord in the air."	"With a <u>shout.</u> "	"With the voice of an archangel,"	"With the <u>trumpet</u> of God."	"The dead in Christ will <u>rise</u> first."	"We...shall be <u>caught up together</u> with them in the clouds."

Is there any reason to imagine Paul is describing a different return than what Jesus described in Matthew 24? If not, Jesus made it clear that the return He was describing would take place "after the tribulation."

## 12. Christ's Return and the Day of the Lord

### Matthew 24 NKJV™

<sup>27</sup> For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. <sup>28</sup> For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.

<sup>29</sup> "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. <sup>30</sup> Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. <sup>31</sup> And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

### Zechariah 9 NKJV™

<sup>14</sup> Then the LORD will be seen over them, And His arrow will go forth like lightning. The Lord GOD will blow the trumpet,

### Joel 3 NKJV™

<sup>15</sup> The sun and moon will grow dark, And the stars will diminish their brightness.

<sup>16</sup> The LORD also will roar from Zion, And utter His voice from Jerusalem; The heavens and earth will shake;

### Daniel 7 NKJV™

<sup>13</sup> "I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven!

### Isaiah 27:12b-13 NKJV™

And you will be gathered one by one, O you children of Israel. <sup>13</sup> So it shall be in that day: The great trumpet will be blown; They will come, who are about to perish in the land of Assyria, And they who are outcasts in the land of Egypt, And shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

### Joel 2 NKJV™

<sup>10</sup> The earth quakes before them, The heavens tremble; The sun and moon grow dark, And the stars diminish their brightness.

<sup>11</sup> The LORD gives voice before His army, For His camp is very great; For strong is the One who executes His word. For the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; Who can endure it?

<sup>12</sup> "Now, therefore," says the LORD, "Turn to Me with all your heart, With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning."

### Isaiah 13 NKJV™

<sup>9</sup> Behold, the day of the LORD comes, Cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, To lay the land desolate; And He will destroy its sinners from it.

<sup>10</sup> For the stars of heaven and their constellations Will not give their light; The sun will be darkened in its going forth, And the moon will not cause its light to shine.

<sup>11</sup> "I will punish the world for its evil, And the wicked for their iniquity; I will halt the arrogance of the proud, And will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. <sup>12</sup> I will make a mortal more rare than fine gold, A man more than the golden wedge of Ophir.

<sup>13</sup> Therefore I will shake the heavens, And the earth will move out of her place, In the wrath of the LORD of hosts And in the day of His fierce anger.

### Psalms 50 NKJV™

<sup>2</sup> Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God will shine forth.

<sup>3</sup> Our God shall come, and shall not keep silent; A fire shall devour before Him, And it shall be very tempestuous all around Him.

<sup>4</sup> He shall call to the heavens from above, And to the earth, that He may judge His people:

<sup>5</sup> "Gather My saints together to Me, Those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice."

**1 Thessalonians 4 NKJV™**

<sup>15</sup> For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. <sup>16</sup> 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. <sup>17</sup> 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.

**Psalm 96 NKJV™**

<sup>12</sup> Let the field be joyful, and all that *is* in it. Then all the trees of the woods will rejoice before the LORD.  
<sup>13</sup> For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness, And the peoples with His truth.

**Zechariah 9 NKJV™**

<sup>14</sup> Then the LORD will be seen over them, And His arrow will go forth like lightning. The Lord GOD will blow the trumpet,

**Isaiah 42 NKJV™**

<sup>13</sup> The LORD shall go forth like a mighty man; He shall stir up *His* zeal like a man of war. He shall cry out, yes, shout aloud;

**Daniel 7 NKJV™**

<sup>13</sup> "I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven!

**Isaiah 31:4**

"As a lion roars, and a young lion over his prey...so the Lord of hosts will come down to fight for Mount Zion and for its hill."

**Isaiah 30:30a**

<sup>30</sup> The LORD will cause His glorious voice to be heard, and show the descent of His arm,

**Isaiah 26 NKJV™**

<sup>19</sup> Your dead shall live;  
Together with my dead body they shall arise.  
Awake and sing, you who dwell in dust;  
For your dew *is like* the dew of herbs,  
And the earth shall cast out the dead.  
<sup>20</sup> Come, my people, enter your chambers,  
And shut your doors behind you;  
Hide yourself, as it were, for a little moment,  
Until the indignation is past.

**Psalm 50 NKJV™**

<sup>2</sup> Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,  
God will shine forth.  
<sup>3</sup> Our God shall come, and shall not keep silent;  
A fire shall devour before Him,  
And it shall be very tempestuous all around Him.  
<sup>4</sup> He shall call to the heavens from above,  
And to the earth, that He may judge His people:  
<sup>5</sup> "Gather My saints together to Me,  
Those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice."

**Zechariah 14:5b NKJV™** Thus the LORD my God will come, *and* all the saints with You.

**1 Thessalonians 4:14 NKJV™** For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

When Jesus taught the disciples about His return, which will take place "after the tribulation," He described events, which will take place during the day of the Lord. If Paul were describing a different return of Christ, why did he too describe events, which take place during the day of the Lord?

Long before Paul, the Scriptures had already said that the Lord would descend from heaven with a shout, with the trumpet of God, bringing all the saints with Him, raise the righteous dead, and gather His saints together. Paul and the teachers in the early church would have known that these things accompany the day of the Lord. Paul was taking what they knew (the day of the Lord) and relating it to Christ's coming, just as Jesus had done.

## 13. Words of Clarification

If Jesus is coming back two more times, why didn't the authors of the New Testament ever clarify which "coming" they were talking about? Today, we cannot speak very long about Christ's return, without needing to clarify whether we're talking about His supposed return before the tribulation, or His certain return after the tribulation.

The New Testament writers had many words of clarification about other topics. We clarify when we say something like, "I did not mean this, but I did mean that." We clarify by saying what we did not mean, and restating what we do mean. Here are just a few of many possible examples.

### 2 Corinthians 2 NKJV™

<sup>4</sup> For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you.

### 2 Corinthians 3 NKJV™

<sup>4</sup> And we have such trust through Christ toward God. <sup>5</sup> Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as *being* from ourselves, but our sufficiency *is* from God,

### 2 Corinthians 7 NKJV™

<sup>9</sup> Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing.

The New Testament authors referred to the Lord's return frequently; why didn't they ever clarify *which* coming of the Lord they were talking about?

### Titus 2 NKJV™

<sup>13</sup> looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

### James 5 NKJV™

<sup>8</sup> You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

### 1 Timothy 6 NKJV™

<sup>14</sup> that you keep *this* commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing,

### Collosians 3 NKJV™

<sup>4</sup> When Christ *who is* our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

### 1 Thessalonians 2 NKJV™

<sup>19</sup> For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? *Is it* not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?

### 1 Thessalonians 3 NKJV™

<sup>13</sup> so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.

Paul wrote Second Thessalonians to clear up confusion over Christ's return. After Paul's standard greeting, he gets right to the subject of Christ's return by verse seven. It would have been a great opportunity to clarify *which* return of Christ He was talking about. Paul didn't mind clarifying what he had written in an earlier epistle. For example, in First Corinthians, he reminded them of what he wrote in an earlier epistle, stated what he did not mean, then restated what he did mean.

### **1 Corinthians 5 NKJV™**

<sup>9</sup> I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. <sup>10</sup> Yet I certainly *did not mean* with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. <sup>11</sup> But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person.

In Second Thessalonians, Paul never clarified *which* return of Christ he was talking about. When a return of Christ before the tribulation is explained, it is said that Paul meant one thing by Christ's "coming" in verse 1 (below), and something different by His "coming" five sentences later. Would Paul do this, without explanation or clarification, in a letter he was writing to clear up confusion about Christ's return?

### **2 Thessalonians 2 NKJV™**

<sup>1</sup> Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come* unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,

<sup>8</sup> And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

The New Testament authors frequently added words of clarification. It would only take one sentence to say that Jesus is coming back two more times. While teaching about His return, Jesus used the three words, "after the tribulation." Why didn't the apostles ever say, "before the tribulation?" Why didn't they ever clarify *which* return of Christ they were talking about? Many people today will examine the context to try to determine which "coming" the authors had in mind. For example, did the writers describe Jesus coming in the sky for believers, or coming in the clouds to make war?

But what if the reason why the New Testament writers never clarified *which* coming of Christ they were referring to, is because there will be only one future return of Christ? If that's the case, we already know when it will be. In Matthew 24, Jesus said that His return would take place, "immediately after the tribulation of those days."

## 14. Teaching Them to Observe All Things

When a rapture before the tribulation is explained, it is sometimes said that what Jesus told the disciples in Matthew 24 does not directly relate to us. It is said that we are the church, and that the disciples at this point were not yet in the church.

However, Jesus told the disciples to make other disciples, “those who will believe in Me through their word,” and Jesus told His disciples to teach their disciples to observe all the things He had commanded them.

### **Matthew 28 NKJV™**

<sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.” Amen.

After Jesus taught about His return “after the tribulation,” He gave several commands to the disciples. Wouldn’t these commands be included under “all things that I have commanded you?”

### **Matthew 24 NKJV™**

<sup>29</sup> “Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. <sup>30</sup> Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

<sup>42</sup> Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.

<sup>44</sup> Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

### **Matthew 25 NKJV™**

<sup>13</sup> “Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

### **Mark 13 NKJV™**

<sup>33</sup> Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is. <sup>34</sup> *It is* like a man going to a far country, who left his house and gave authority to his servants, and to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to watch. <sup>35</sup> Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the

house is coming—in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning—<sup>36</sup> lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. <sup>37</sup> And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!”

**Luke 21 NKJV™**

<sup>25</sup> “And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; <sup>26</sup> men’s hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. <sup>27</sup> Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. <sup>28</sup> Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.”

**Luke 21 NKJV™**

<sup>36</sup> Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

How can it be said that these commands do not apply directly to us? These are the things Jesus told His disciples to do. Later, He told them to teach their disciples, “to observe all things that I have commanded you.”

Therefore, haven’t we been commanded to be “watching” and to “be ready” for the return of Christ, which Jesus specifically said would come, “after the tribulation of those days?” Haven’t we been commanded to “look up and lift up” our heads because our redemption is near, when these things (signs in the sun, moon, and stars, distress of nations, and the sea roaring) begin to happen?

Sometimes, it is said that these commands apply only to future “tribulation saints.” However, Jesus said that His teaching was for the disciples and for all: “And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!” He was not addressing His remarks to some future generation of tribulation saints. He was commanding His disciples. He did not tell them that they did not need to watch, because His return would not take place in their lifetimes. Jesus commanded His disciples to watch and be ready for His post-tribulation return. Later, He told them to teach their disciples to observe all that He had commanded them.

From Jesus, via the apostles, we have been commanded to “watch” and “be ready” for Christ’s return “after the tribulation.”

Jesus said that we should observe the things He commanded His disciples. One of the things He commanded them to do was to watch and be ready for His return—the return, which He said would take place, “after the tribulation of those days.”



## 15. Not Appointed to Wrath

When a rapture before the tribulation is explained, it is often said that because the church has not been appointed to wrath, and because the tribulation is a time when God's wrath is unleashed, the church cannot be on the earth during that time.

### 1 Thessalonians 5 NKJV™

<sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Paul did say, "For God did not appoint us to wrath," but the sentence continues: "but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ." This agrees with what Jesus said: "He who endures to the end shall be saved." The righteous (the wheat) are not appointed to wrath, but to salvation; however, they still grow in the field with the wicked (the tares) until the end. Their salvation comes at the end (not seven years before the end). Paul said we are not appointed to wrath, but to salvation, because we are of the day. We are not to sleep morally, like others do. We are to watch and be ready. Watching is the opposite of sleeping.

Jesus said the same thing. He said that the servant who does not watch, but begins to mistreat his fellow servants and drink with the drunkards would be cut in two and given his portion with the hypocrites. Both Paul and Jesus told us to watch. They both warned against sleeping morally and being drunk. They both told us to be prepared, because Christ's return could come when we're not ready—like the coming of a thief.

The entire book of Revelation was written to the church. It describes how to escape God's wrath. The way to avoid God's wrath is to believe in Christ and reject the beast.

### Revelation 14 NKJV™

<sup>9</sup> Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives *his* mark on his forehead or on his hand, <sup>10</sup> he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. <sup>11</sup> And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

<sup>12</sup> Here is the patience of the saints; here *are* those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

### Revelation 22 NKJV™

<sup>16</sup> "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star."

We have been commanded to watch and be ready for Christ's post-tribulation return— to keep His works “until the end.” However, we might be short-circuiting that command, by saying that it doesn't apply to us. Experiencing wrath has to do with intent. If God is not angry with us, then we cannot be the object His wrath—even though we suffer. If someone purposely runs us off the road, it is said to be “road rage.” However, a policeman might run us off the road in order to save our lives, if we've been kidnapped. We may be injured in the process. The policeman is doing it to rescue us. His “rage” is directed at the criminal. God judges the wicked *in order* to rescue the righteous.

**Isaiah 35:4 NKJV™**

Say to those *who are* fearful-hearted, "Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God; He will come and save you."

**Habakkuk 3:12-13a NKJV™**

<sup>12</sup> You marched through the land in indignation;  
You trampled the nations in anger.

<sup>13</sup> You went forth for the salvation of Your people,  
For salvation with Your Anointed.

“Your Anointed” means the Messiah. Jesus will bring salvation for His people by trampling the nations in anger. See Revelation 14.

**Jeremiah 25 NKJV™**

<sup>30</sup> “Therefore prophesy against them all these words, and say to them: ‘The LORD will roar from on high, And utter His voice from His holy habitation; He will roar mightily against His fold. He will give a shout, as those who tread the grapes, Against all the inhabitants of the earth.

<sup>31</sup> A noise will come to the ends of the earth— For the LORD has a controversy with the nations; He will plead His case with all flesh. He will give those who are wicked to the sword,’ says the LORD.”

**1 Thess. 4:16a NKJV™**

“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout...”

**Revelation 14 NKJV™**

<sup>19</sup> So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw *it* into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

**2 Thessalonians 1 NKJV™**

<sup>6</sup> since *it is* a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, <sup>7</sup> and to *give* you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, <sup>8</sup> in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Daniel 7 NKJV™**

<sup>21</sup> “I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, <sup>22</sup> until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made *in favor* of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom.

**Romans 2 NKJV™**

<sup>5</sup> But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, <sup>6</sup> who “*will render to each one according to his deeds*”: <sup>7</sup> eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; <sup>8</sup> but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath,

## 16. The Day of Christ

“The day of Christ” is a term, which refers to Christ’s coming after the tribulation. It is the same thing as the day of the LORD, because Christ is LORD. It cannot take place until after the “falling away” and the antichrist is revealed.

### **2 Thessalonians 2 NKJV™**

<sup>1</sup> Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, <sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>8</sup> And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

The day of Christ is a time of punishment for the wicked and blessing for the church. In Philippians 2 (below) Paul speaks about rejoicing in the day of Christ, and would seem to be looking forward to it. If there were two future returns of Christ, wouldn’t Paul be looking forward to the very next one to take place? It will give Paul joy and satisfaction in the day of Christ that his labor was not in vain.

### **Philippians 2 NKJV™**

<sup>14</sup> Do all things without complaining and disputing, <sup>15</sup> that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, <sup>16</sup> holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.

Paul and the Corinthian believers will take pride and satisfaction in each other in the day of Christ. Below, Paul mentions “the end.” Jesus also spoke about “the end,” when referring to end of age: “But he who endures to the end shall be saved.”

### **2 Corinthians 1:8 NKJV™**

<sup>13</sup> For we are not writing any other things to you than what you read or understand. Now I trust you will understand, even to the end <sup>14</sup> (as also you have understood us in part), that we are your boast as you also are ours, in the day of the Lord Jesus.

The day of Christ, which Paul said would not come until after the antichrist is revealed, will be a source of joy and satisfaction to believers. It would seem to be the

next big event that Paul is looking forward to. The day of Christ is the same thing as the day of the LORD (the day of Yahweh). Peter said, “God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.” The Father has given Jesus the name above all other names. “Yeshua” is short for “Yehoshua,” which means Yahweh is Salvation.

**Philippians 2:5 NKJV™**

<sup>9</sup> Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The Messiah is also called “Yahweh our Righteousness” (Yahweh Tsidkenu).

**Jeremiah 23 NKJV™**

<sup>5</sup> “Behold, *the* days are coming,” says the LORD,  
“That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness;  
A King shall reign and prosper,  
And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth.

<sup>6</sup> In His days Judah will be saved,  
And Israel will dwell safely;  
Now this *is* His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR  
RIGHTEOUSNESS.

**John 8:58 NKJV™**

<sup>58</sup> Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.”

We can see that the terms “the day of Christ,” “the day of Jesus Christ,” “the day of the Lord Jesus,” and “the day of our Lord Jesus Christ” mean the same thing. Jesus is the same person however His names and titles are arranged. It’s still His day—the day of Christ—the day of the LORD. In Philippians 1, Paul prayed that the church would abound in love and be sincere, without offense *until* the day of Christ. Would he say this, if Jesus were coming back seven years before the day of Christ? If Jesus were coming before the tribulation, wouldn’t that coming be Paul’s focus? Wouldn’t that be the next big event we’d be looking forward to?

Add to this the fact that the very things Paul described accompanying Christ’s return (the Lord descending with a shout, the trumpet of God, the resurrection of the just, the gathering of believers) were things already prophesied to take place during the day of the LORD. We can see that the day of Christ is the same thing as the day of the LORD. Paul said that it wouldn’t take place until after the antichrist is revealed. Zechariah said that Yahweh’s feet would stand on the Mount of Olives during the day of the LORD. Jesus ascended from the Mount of Olives and will return “in like manner.” All these things will be accomplished by the Son, during the day of the LORD, which is the day of Christ, when Christ comes to rescue the righteous by destroying the enemies of God.

## 17. Frequently Asked Questions or Objections

### 1. In Revelation 3:10, Jesus told the church in Philadelphia that He would keep them from the hour of trial. Does that mean we won't go through the tribulation?

The church of Philadelphia was located in what is modern Turkey. Perhaps that region of Turkey will be spared in some way. Or, perhaps, Jesus makes the same promise to those today who keep Christ's command to persevere. Jesus told them, "Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth." Then He said that we should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches. The word "keep," which Jesus used in Revelation is the same word used in John 17:15, "I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one." According to Jesus, we don't need to be removed from the world to be kept from the evil one. And, even though we are "kept," Peter still called the devil our "adversary." Even though we are kept from Satan, Paul still said that Satan hindered him. Peter said that Satan filled the heart of Ananias. Paul said that Satan could take advantage of us, and that Satan could tempt us. Jesus told the church of Smyrna that the devil was about to throw some of them into prison. Jesus prayed that we would be kept from the evil one, but we are not immune to anything that Satan can do. In the same way, being "kept" from the hour of trial, does not mean that the hour of trial cannot touch us whatsoever. Satan can still affect our lives, but we are kept (or guarded) from him. We are kept from being destroyed by him. The hour of trial can still affect our lives. Being kept from the hour of trial does not mean being removed from the earth, but being guarded and kept from being destroyed by it.

### 2. Isn't Christ's return imminent? Couldn't it take place at any time?

When Christ's return is said to be imminent, it is said that there is nothing that must take place before Christ returns. Some events *may* take place first, but it is said that there is nothing that *must* take place first. However, almost everything that is said of Christ's return is also said of the day of the Lord, and there are things which must take place before the day of the Lord comes. For instance, the sun and moon will be darkened first. Paul also said that the man of sin must be revealed before the day of Christ takes place. The concept of imminence is usually drawn from various statements, many of which speak of how we are eagerly waiting for Christ's return—statements such as, "eagerly waiting," "looking for," "wait for," "at hand," and "at the door." However, when Paul wrote that we are "eagerly waiting" for Christ's return, that doesn't mean he was describing a different return than what Jesus described in Matthew 24. When Jesus spoke of His return, which would take place, "after the tribulation of those days," He told us to be watching for His return, which means to stay vigilant and ready. Although Philippians 4:5 says that the Lord is "at hand." Joel 1:15 and Zephaniah 1:17 say that the day of the Lord is at hand. James 5:9 says that the Judge is standing at the door (which means He is near). Ezekiel 30:3, Obadiah 9:15, and Zephaniah 1:14 say that the day of the Lord is near. In his letters, the things Paul mentioned accompanying Christ's return, are all things, which the prophets said would take place during the day of the Lord. The New Testament authors did not say anything regarding Christ's return that was inconsistent with the day of the Lord or Jesus'

teachings regarding His return after the tribulation. They said we were waiting and watching for Jesus; they said His return was at hand, even at the door, but these statements are consistent with what the prophets wrote about the day of the Lord. Even though Christ's return after the tribulation isn't imminent, it could still catch us unprepared. That's why Jesus told us to watch and be ready. Sometimes it is said that Christ's return is imminent, because it could take place sooner or later. Even though there are things, which must precede Christ's return after the tribulation, it could still take place sooner or later. Jesus said in Mark 13:35, "Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming—in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning." "Imminent" is the wrong English word to describe Christ's return, because there are some things which must precede it. However, Jesus commanded us to watch vigilantly for His post-tribulation return, which would catch an evil servant unprepared, and which could come sooner or later. He didn't tell us to wait for the signs, then repent.

**3. When Jesus returns after the tribulation, He will stand on the Mount of Olives. However, Paul said that believers would meet the Lord in the air. Isn't Paul describing a different return than Jesus did?**

As Jesus continued to teach about His return in Matthew 25, He said that He would sit on the throne of His glory, and that all the nations would be gathered before Him; however, when He was actually describing His return in Matthew 24, He did not mention His descending to the earth. Neither Jesus in Matthew 24 nor Paul in First Thessalonians 4 said that Jesus touches the ground. It would be unrealistic to expect Paul to mention Jesus' standing on the Mount of Olives, when Jesus Himself didn't mention His standing on the Mount of Olives, when describing His own return (which takes place after the tribulation). The fact that Paul didn't mention Jesus' standing on the earth is actually something his description has in common with Jesus' description. Both Jesus and Paul describe Christ returning in the sky, and it is actually Paul who says He will "descend from heaven." Unless Jesus were to stop descending, He would eventually touch the earth. Paul did not say Jesus would stop descending or go back into heaven. He said we would meet Him in the air and be with Him forever. Jesus' eventual standing on the Mount of Olives is not inconsistent with His initial arrival in the sky.

**4. If all unbelievers are killed at Christ's second coming, and all living believers are glorified, who will populate the earth during the millennium?**

Not every unbeliever will be killed during the day of the Lord. Some of those who come to fight against Christ will be allowed to escape, in order to take the message of what they have seen to the nations.

**Isaiah 66:18-20a NKJV™**

<sup>18</sup> "For I *know* their works and their thoughts. It shall be that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and see My glory. <sup>19</sup> I will set a sign among them; and those among them who escape I will send to the nations: to Tarshish and Pul and Lud, who draw the bow, and Tubal and Javan, to the coastlands afar off who have not heard My fame nor seen My glory. And they shall declare My glory among the Gentiles.  
<sup>20</sup> Then they shall bring all your brethren for an offering to the LORD out

of all nations, on horses and in chariots and in litters, on mules and on camels, to My holy mountain Jerusalem,” says the LORD

Some who begin the day as enemies of God, will be allowed to escape to declare His glory to the nations. Perhaps there will be a time of repentance. Daniel described a period of 75 days after the tribulation. We don't have many details about what will be taking place during that time, but perhaps many will turn to the Lord and help bring the Israelites back to their land. These people who turn to God, after He has defeated His enemies, may be the ones who populate the millennium.

### **5. Wasn't the rapture a mystery? Wasn't Paul teaching something that Jesus hadn't taught?**

A mystery is something that had previously been kept secret. There is one passage in the New Testament that uses the word, “mystery,” and specifically links it to the resurrection of believers. What is the mystery it speaks about?

#### **1 Corinthians 15 NKJV™**

<sup>50</sup> Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. <sup>51</sup> Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— <sup>52</sup> 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. <sup>53</sup> For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

- It wasn't a mystery that there would be a resurrection of the just and the unjust.
- It wasn't a mystery that Jesus would be returning.
- It wasn't a mystery that the *dead* in Christ would need to undergo a radical transformation.

The new information was that the *living* would undergo a radical transformation as well. The mystery was that even though we won't all die, we will *all* be changed. When Christ returns, we won't rule and reign with Him in our current, fleshly bodies. Our current bodies will be changed and glorified, to be like His. The mystery was not that the *dead* in Christ would be radically changed when He returns, but that we will *all* be changed—both living and dead.

### **6. Won't the Holy Spirit be removed from the earth, when all the Christians are taken to heaven?**

Sometimes, when a rapture before the tribulation is explained, it is said that the passage below refers to the Holy Spirit restraining lawlessness in the world. It is said that when believers are removed from the earth, the Holy Spirit's restraint is removed as well, because He is restraining evil through the presence of believers in the world.

#### **1 Thessalonians 2 NKJV™**

<sup>6</sup> And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. <sup>7</sup> For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who

now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way.<sup>8</sup> And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

From the passage, it's clear that God is doing the restraining, and even if we understood it to be the work of the Holy Spirit, does His being taken out of the way, necessarily mean that He is removed, along with believers, from the earth? Just because God stops restraining the lawlessness, it doesn't necessarily mean that He has removed His presence or believers from the earth. He can restrain by His word, by decree.

**Job 1 NKJV™**

<sup>9</sup> So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing?"

<sup>10</sup> Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. <sup>11</sup> But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!"

<sup>12</sup> And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has *is* in your power; only do not lay a hand on his *person*."

So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

The Lord had originally placed "a hedge" around Job, his family, and his possessions. He was restraining or holding back any evil or calamity, which could have been directed towards Job. Next, the Lord removed some of His protection, but still restrained Satan by His words, "only do not lay a hand on his person." When the Lord allowed Satan to harm Job's family, servants, and belongings, by removing His restraint, it did not involve Job being removed from the earth, and there's nothing in the account to suggest it involved God being removed from the earth somehow. The book of Job describes God both restraining and removing His restraint by His word. Paul said that the lawless one would come according to the working of Satan, so it stands to reason that the lawless one could be restrained the same way as Satan. We know that God cannot be "taken out of the way" by anyone other than Himself. We speak the same way today. We say things like, "I won't stand in your way," or "I'll get out of your way." Usually, we aren't talking about physically removing our presence; we're talking about removing our opposition. Just as God removed some of His protection from Job, the Scriptures say that God, according to His purposes, will for a time, allow the antichrist to make war with the saints and overcome them.

**7. Aren't the church and Israel different? Doesn't this mean that the church will be removed from the earth during the tribulation?**

Whether you believe Israel and the church are exactly the same, or whether you believe Israel and the church are completely different, it doesn't change the fact that the Apostle John described "the first resurrection" taking place after Christ returns on the white horse, after the tribulation. It doesn't change the fact that death will be the last enemy to be destroyed (not the antichrist). It doesn't change the fact that death will be defeated when the dead in Christ are raised and living believers are changed. This means that the dead in Christ will be raised and living believers will be changed sometime after the antichrist and the other enemies of Christ are defeated—after the tribulation.



**8. Why isn't the word "church" mentioned in Revelation between chapters 3 and 22? Doesn't that mean that the church is removed from the earth?**

Here's a question in reply: because the book of Revelation describes things taking place both in heaven and on earth, why wouldn't the church be mentioned regardless of its location? Even if the church were removed to heaven during the tribulation, why wouldn't it be mentioned? The answer is that the church is in the book of Revelation, but it may be hiding in plain sight. While it's true that the word "church" does not appear in Revelation after chapter 3, until 22:16, the entire book is written to the church. There are chapters in Acts, where the word "church" doesn't appear, so that by itself doesn't indicate the church's removal from the earth. There are other words that describe us besides "church."

For instance, Paul addressed the letter to the Romans, to the "saints" in Rome. He didn't use the word "church." While he addressed First Corinthians to "the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints." We are called the "church" (the called out assembly) and "saints" (holy ones).

If you search for the word "saints" in Revelation, you'll find it in chapters 5, 8, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20. Revelation 13:7 says, "It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them." Revelation 14:12 says, "Here is the patience of the saints; here [are] those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus."

It could also be pointed out that the word "resurrection" does not appear in Revelation until chapter 20. And what does Revelation 20 say about it? It says, "This is the first resurrection." It does specifically describe those being raised, who were beheaded for Christ, who did not receive the mark of the beast. However, from the Old Testament, we know that Daniel and Job will be resurrected at this time. Daniel was told that he would be raised "at the end of the days." Job said that he would see God in his (resurrected) flesh at the last, when His Redeemer stands on the earth. So there are more people being raised than just those who were beheaded for not taking the mark of the beast. Plus, Jesus, using wording very similar to Job, said that He would raise the one who believes in Him "at the last day." If the first resurrection does not take place until Revelation 20, then there wasn't a resurrection seven years before.

## **18. Questions About Christ's Return**

*Designed to Demonstrate a Post-Tribulation Resurrection and Rapture*

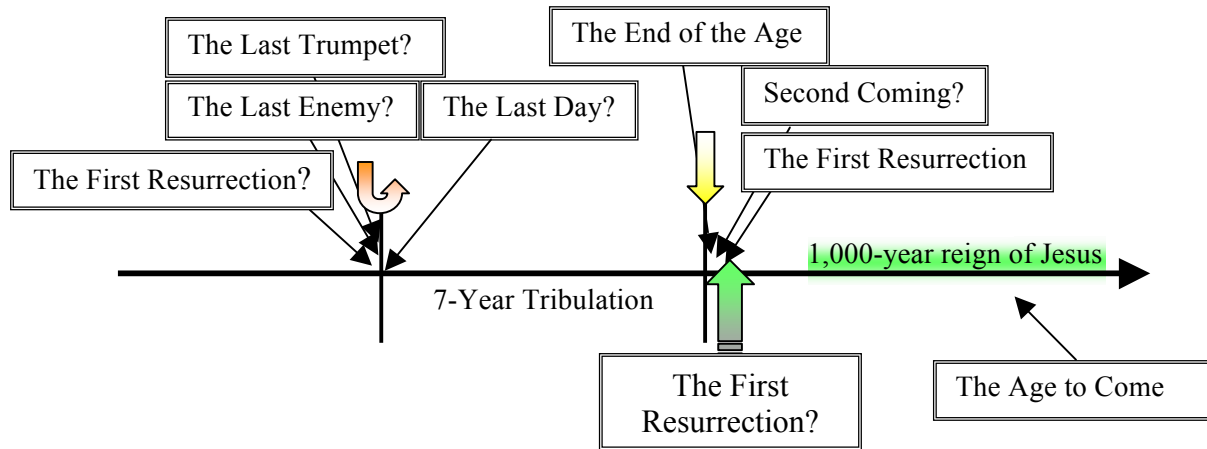
1. According to the Apostle John in the book of Revelation, when is “the first resurrection?”
2. According to the Apostle John, what enemies of Christ will be defeated just before the first resurrection?
3. According to the author of Hebrews, from the time Jesus ascended into heaven, what has He been waiting for?
4. According to King David in Psalm 110, after the Messiah sits at the Father's right hand, He will return to Zion and rule in the midst of what?
5. According to the Apostle Paul in First Corinthians, what will be “the last enemy” to be destroyed?
6. Which enemy will be defeated first: death, or the antichrist?
7. According to the Apostle Paul, what event signifies that death has been “swallowed up in victory” and defeated?
8. According to the Old Testament (the Scriptures which Paul and the early church studied) when will the Lord descend from heaven with a shout?
9. According to the Old Testament, when will the Lord, “blow the trumpet?”
10. According to Jesus, when will He send out His angels with “a great sound of a trumpet” to gather His elect?
11. At what trumpet did the Apostle Paul say believers in Christ would be raised?
12. Until when do the wheat and tares (the righteous and the wicked) grow together?
13. Which is gathered first: the wheat, or the tares?
14. When is the end of the age (“this present evil age” as Paul called it)?
15. What is “the age to come,” which Jesus and the apostles spoke of?
16. According to Jesus, what will happen to the one who “endures to the end?”

17. According to the Apostle Paul, believers have not been appointed to wrath, but instead, we have been appointed to receive what?
18. When discussing His return at the end of the age with His disciples in Matthew 24, Jesus promised salvation to those who endure “to the end.” Until when did Jesus tell the church at Thyatira to keep His works?
19. The angels said Jesus would come back “in like manner” to the way He left. How did He leave? From where did He leave?
20. According to Zechariah, when will the LORD “stand on the Mount of Olives?”
21. According to Job, when will his Redeemer stand on the earth and Job be resurrected?
22. According to the book of Daniel, when will Daniel be resurrected?
23. According to Jesus, on what day will He raise His followers?
24. When is the last day?
25. According to the Apostle Paul, what will we, the persecuted church, receive when “Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance” on the wicked?
26. According to Paul, in his second letter to the Thessalonians, “when” will the persecuted church receive rest from its afflictions?
27. According to Paul, in his letter to the Romans, what will believers receive “in the day of wrath,” when God’s righteous judgment is revealed?
28. According to the Old Testament, when will the Lord descend from heaven with a shout, with the trumpet of God, bringing all the saints with Him, raise the righteous dead, and gather His saints together?
29. Do the earth-shaking events listed in question 28 take place twice, on two separate occasions? Or, was Paul referring to the things already described in the Scriptures and relating them to Christ, showing that these things will be fulfilled by the Son during the day of the Lord?
30. Would those teachers in the early church (who like Timothy, had known the Scriptures from childhood) have been familiar with these events and known what Paul was referring to?

# 19. Fitting

*A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver. Proverbs 25:11 NKJV™*

In the pre-tribulation interpretation, there are several biblical terms that just don't fit. Many terms are placed out of the order which their names would suggest.



### Last Trumpet

Paul said that we would be raised and gathered "together" at the last trumpet, but, in the pre-tribulation view, this trumpet would supposedly sound seven years before the trumpet Jesus described in Matthew 24, which He uses to "gather together His elect."

### Last Enemy

Paul said that the last enemy, death, would be defeated (swallowed up in victory) when the dead in Christ are raised, but this would supposedly happen before the antichrist and other enemies of Christ are defeated. How then could death be last?

### First Resurrection

Revelation 20:4-6 describes the first resurrection taking place after Jesus returns on the white horse, but according to the pre-tribulation view, this would not actually be the first. How could our resurrection take place seven years before the first? Or, how could there be two resurrections which are both first?

### Second Coming

Hebrews 9:28 says that Jesus will appear a "second time" for salvation, but if Jesus is returning two more times in the future, they would be His second and third comings.

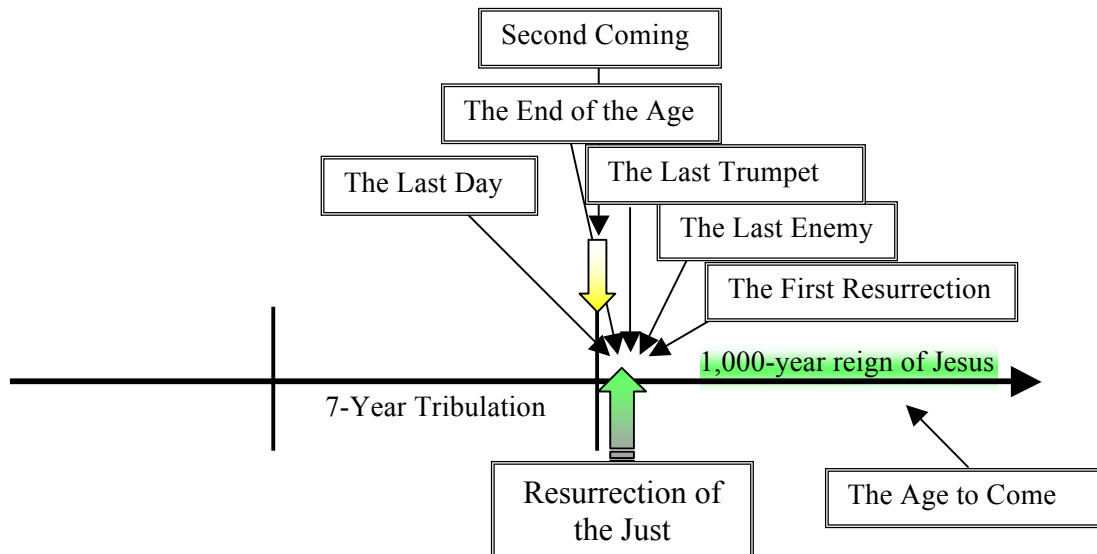
### The End

"The end" is how Jesus referred to the end of the age in Matthew 24. He said that the one who endured to the end would be saved (rescued). He then went on to describe His return and the gathering of His elect "after the tribulation." If the end of the age comes after the tribulation, why would Jesus tell the church of Thyatira to keep His works "until the end?"

### Last Day

Jesus said He would raise the one who believes in Him, "at the last day." Job said that His Redeemer would stand on the earth at the last, and that he (Job) would be raised. However, in the pre-tribulation view, Job would be raised seven years after believers in Christ. Does Jesus' "last day" come seven years before Job's?

In the big picture of future events, all the biblical terms diagrammed below, appear to point to the same general time—after the tribulation. Many of these events are described using clear words, such as “first” or “last.”



There isn't a passage which specifically says that “the last enemy” will be destroyed on “the last day,” but it would be fitting. It would be appropriate.

It would be fitting for **the end of the age** to take place before **the age to come**.

It would be fitting for **the last day** to take place at **the end of the age**.

It would be fitting for **the first resurrection** to take place when **the last enemy** (death) is destroyed.

It would be fitting for **the last trumpet** to sound during **the last day**, when **the last enemy** is destroyed.

The Old Testament Scriptures speak of the Lord blowing the trumpet during the day of the Lord, and Paul said that we would be raised at the last trumpet. Jesus said that we would be raised at the last day, and said that He would send the angels with a great sound of a trumpet to gather His elect. If the day of the Lord is the last day, then the Scriptures, Jesus, and Paul are all describing the same thing. It would be fitting for the day of the Lord to be the last day. It would be fitting for Paul to agree with Jesus, and for Jesus to agree with the Scriptures.

In the pre-tribulation view, these biblical terms just don't fit together in a logical order. The second coming isn't really the second coming; the first resurrection isn't really the first, and so on. However, when these terms are understood to refer to Christ's return at the end of the age, everything falls into place.