

The Mystery of the Rapture. - The Biblical Reasons that the Rapture is Pre-Tribulational

The Pre-Tribulational Rapture is not an independent truth. It is a mystery and with the other mysteries, forms the mosaic or tapestry of the truths by which we live and for which we hope. Most people who do not believe in the Pre-tribulational Rapture, do so because they do not believe other key doctrines, or do not fully understand the implications of other key truths. We have seen that the New Testament writers viewed the Lord's coming for us as imminent. They expected nothing to intervene. This is one of the strongest reasons but there several others.

The nature of the Church

This reason relates to the doctrine of the Church, not the doctrine of last times [prophecy] and yet the two can not be separated.

The Church was future from Christ's perspective. Matthew 16:18

The Church is not Israel. 1 Corinthians 10:32. Christ's Olivet Discourse, in which He speaks of the Tribulation, was spoke to Jews about their future, not the Church's future. Matthew 24-25.

The "saints" spoken of are not saints in the Church but within the Nation Israel.

Most features of the Church were mysteries (previously unrevealed truths - Colossians 1:26).

The future of the Church including the translation of living saints, resurrection of sleeping saints, and simultaneous gather of the saints to meet the Lord in the air was a mystery. 1 Corinthians 15:51-53. In contrast the resurrection of Old Testament saints, the Tribulation period, and Return of Christ were clearly revealed in the Old Testament.

Daniel's 70th Week is a time specifically to deal with the nation of Israel. Daniel 9:24

70 weeks [lit. sevens] were decreed for them.

These 70 sevens are intended to deal with Israel's rebellion, transgression, sin, perversity. cp Malachi 3:2; Ezekiel 20:37-38

These 70 sevens will result in eternal righteousness.

Church saints are not appointed to wrath 1 Thessalonians 5:9 and will never come into **judgment** John 5:24.

The Church is promised a delivery away from the wrath and the coming hour of testing for the world. 1 Thessalonians 1:10; Revelation 3:10.

Believer's are not judged at the Rapture. It is the value of our works of service that is determined 1 Corinthians 3:12-15.

God's wrath is coming in the future upon the sons of disobedience. Ephesians 5:6 ; Colossians 3:6

The Tribulation is a time of God's wrath and judgment. Revelation 6:17; 14:7.

The Rapture is a comfort concerning those believers who have died 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

If the Church were to face the Tribulation, we should rejoice that those believer's who have died, escaped that time rather than grieve with no hope. In Revelation during the Tribulation we read "... happy are those who died ..." Revelation 14:13.

The Day of the Lord and the revealing of the man of lawlessness can not take place until after the "departure". This departure, in light of the context is the physical departure of the saints to be with Christ 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3

Note that if *apostasia* is taken in a spiritual sense, then Paul's order is later wrong. Paul points out that the Lord will send a strong delusion, in which these people will really apostasize and worship the man of lawlessness.

The Thessalonians believers were ignorant of the Rapture truths but knew accurately the truths concerning the Day of the Lord 1 Thessalonians 4:13; 5:1, 2. Therefore, the Day of the Lord and the Rapture are not one and the same. They didn't know

The Twenty-Four Elders of Revelation 4 represent the Church doing priestly service wearing the victor's wreathes given them by the Lord. Therefore, the Church is in heaven at the beginning of the Tribulation, already rewarded. These elders are present when Christ begins to open the seals. Revelation 4:4, 10-11.

The believers in the Tribulation are either Jews or Gentiles and never referred to as the Church. The Gentiles remain Gentiles and the Jews remain Jews. This does not fit with Paul's statement concerning the Church. Galatians 3:27; Colossians 3:11. There is never any mention of "the Church" in Tribulation passages or after Revelation 3. Since the Church is not mentioned, and those who are mentioned are described as being either Jews or Gentiles, the Church is not in view in any of the passages.

The whole world will be reached with the gospel of the kingdom, "repent for the Kingdom from the heavens is at hand" Matthew 3:2; 4:17; "Wait for the Lord" Psalm 37:7-9, 34; by Jehovah's 144,000 sealed Jewish witnesses Matthew 24:14. This is not the gospel of salvation which the Church proclaims 1 Corinthians 15:1-4.

Daniel's 70th Week is designed to purge out the remaining rebels of Israel, to put an end to their sin and transgression and to cause Israel to return to Jehovah Jeremiah 30:1-11; Daniel 9:24. It is never said to have any purpose related to the Church. The nature of Grace in which the Church operates is foreign to the purpose of the Tribulation.

Christ and the Old Testament prophets clearly said that signs would precede Christ's return and yet no mention is every made of signs in any of the epistles written to the Church Matthew 25:15-31; Isaiah 13:9-11; Joel 3:30-32