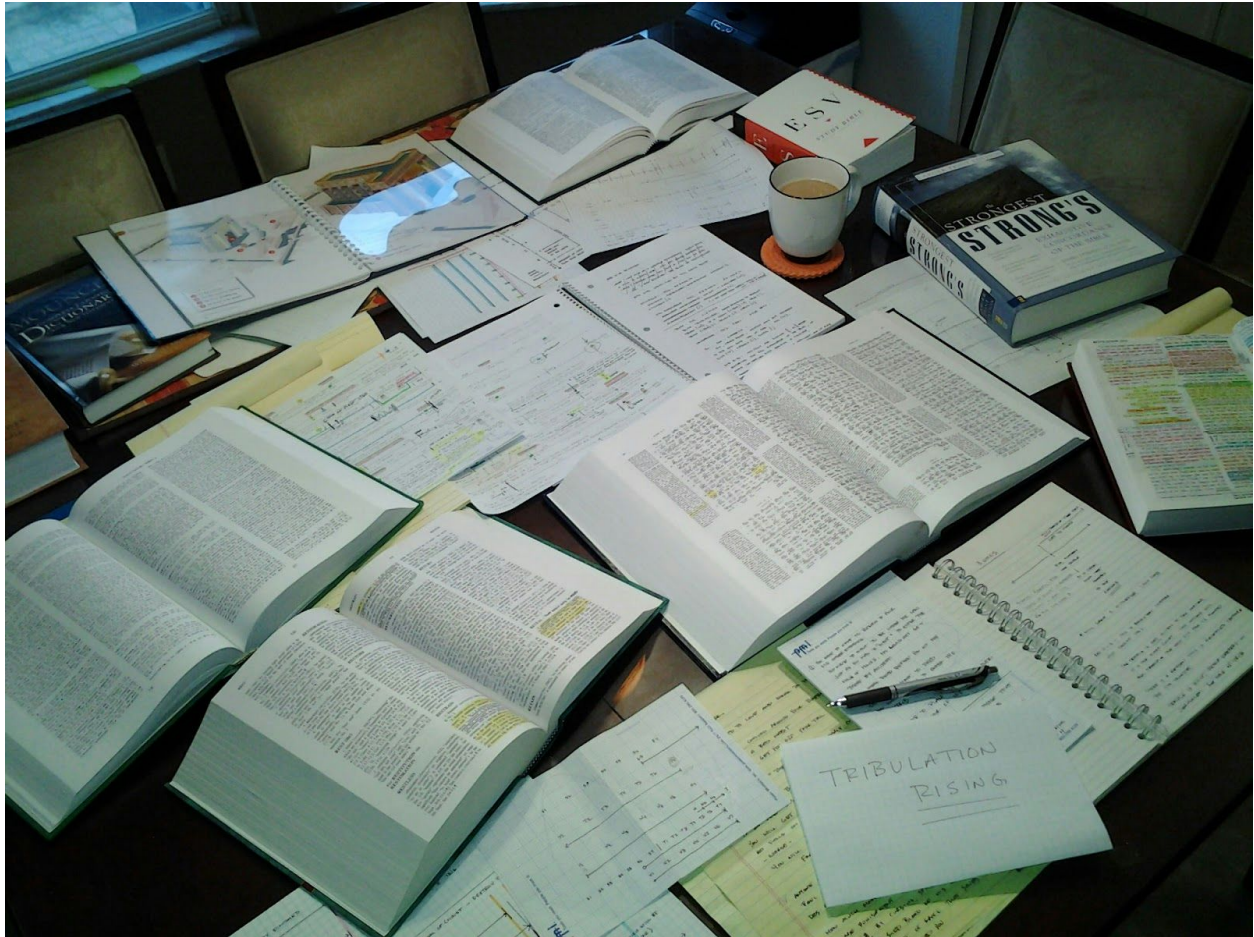


TRIBULATION RISING: THE SERIES



SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE OF A PRE-TRIBULATION RAPTURE

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Here is a collection of evidences for the pre-tribulation rapture (presented in no particular order):



After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter - Revelation 4:1

One of the original arguments against a pre-tribulation rapture (though it occurs to a much lesser degree these days) is the quoting of 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4:

Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

For many this always seemed as case closed. In their minds there was no need to look any further as this said everything they needed to hear. How many Biblical scholars have wanted to absolutely pull their hair out every time they heard this same argument?

Here is the thing - this single quote would literally shut down the discussion. Even well studied scholars that actively considered all sides to the rapture debate understood unequivocally that this was an erroneous position. What irritated most of us was not some "great hidden mystery" that had to be gleaned from these two scriptures and bent to fit the pre-tribulation rapture.

It was that simple reading comprehension skills were enough to set these two scriptures into the proper context. Every time we heard this same argument we would cringe, knowing that the individual that proffered this particular proof was either lazy in their studies, lacked genuine understanding or practicing outright deception.

For the record - that "day" mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 is not the rapture - it is the Day of the Lord. If you doubt me on this I would offer verse 2 as proof. In fact, let's examine all three together - along with verses 1 and 5 - to establish context:

2 Thessalonians 2:1-5:

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

*** STOP ***

That ye be not soon *shaken in mind, or be troubled*, neither by spirit, nor by word, *nor by letter as from us*, as ***that the DAY OF CHRIST is at hand.***

*** STOP ***

Let no man deceive you by any means: for **THAT DAY** ^{^^^} **shall not come**, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

I highlighted and italicized several key points to illustrate once and for all what is being said here. First of all, a false letter had arrived at the church in Thessaloniki that claimed to be from Paul, and that the rapture had already occurred and the tribulation (the Day of the Lord) had begun. The church was fearful that they had missed the rapture.

Let us discuss for a moment something that is missed by rapture critics that declare the rapture as a modern invention. Understand that the Bible was assembled during the Council of Nicea in 325 AD, with the final version containing the 66 books we now read emerging in 367 AD. By the end of the century the current form was the accepted and ratified form utilized by the official church of Rome.

During that council (and the councils that followed), 318 Bishops of the church met, prayed and assembled the Bible according to the move of the Holy Spirit.

What is important to understand is that the first and second letters from Paul to the Thessalonians were among the texts to be considered.

What this means is profound in its implication - ***the early church Fathers (some of whom sat under the Disciples of Paul himself) had to consider the matter of the rapture.*** It would not only be discussed and considered by the first council, but it would

be accepted, confirmed and verified by the various dioceses that comprised of the official church over the next 50 or so years.

If the rapture was a modern invention it would not be found in the Bible. Likewise, First Thessalonians is one of the first letters that Paul wrote to the church after he returned from Arabia. Many scholars date the letter to be the first written by Paul. It is interesting - the rapture is a landmark doctrine. How appropriate that the first thing Paul should teach is the single most revolutionary doctrine ever revealed (outside salvation) - delivered to him by Jesus Christ himself.

Also, the rapture itself is never referred to in the Bible as a "day". This is a distinction that is reserved for events that actually define and run the course of day. The day of the Lord, the day of wrath, the day of Christ and the feast days are all such examples of a "day". All of these events last a mandatory minimum of one day - whether it be the 1,000 year day or the one year day. In the context of the primary distinction of the "day" - the 1,000 year day - the rapture lasts but a fraction of a second. Indeed, the entire time period of the tribulation equates only to about three seconds total of the Day of the Lord. In the context of the one year day, the rapture will last but a mere few moments.

Now, what we see in the scriptures above can be spoken as;

"Look, I already told you this - the tribulation comes after the gathering together. We cannot have missed the Gathering Together, as we are NOT in the tribulation. If we were in the tribulation and Christ had already come back then the whole world would be suffering destruction at the hands of God and the Antichrist - not just us. The last time I checked the Antichrist had not shown up. Remember, it is not possible for these to have happened as we are still here. Remember, we are not meant for wrath and destruction in the tribulation "

If you read through these scriptures a few more times you will see it. Sometimes it helps to rewrite these scriptures line by line to decipher the conversation. When he admonishes the Thessalonians you can see that he goes above their original concerns. You can almost see him shaking his head as he hears what has occurred. It must have been like a parent aggravated that their children have not listened.

Look at these verses from this context:

Verse 3 - Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,

They will say "see, the rapture does not happen until after the Antichrist comes. It says that day".

They never see that "that day" is defined by verse 2. Here are the first five verses:

Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, *to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.*

Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.

Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? ~

Notice above, it does not refer to the gathering together unto the Lord Jesus as a "day". It does however define the day of the Lord as a "day". Try this on for size:

"not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us,

Once more, to let it set in:

not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,"

First off - did you catch that? A letter - from Paul - that the Day of the Lord had already come. Not the gathering together unto Christ - but the Day of the Lord!

The gathering together unto Christ is the grand subject of this conversation. However, Paul chooses to speak to the fear that the Day of the Lord was what had come.

Why?

If the rapture does not come until after the Day of the Lord, then why would the Thessalonians be troubled? They would still have hope that the rapture was at the door - as the tribulation had already begun!

If you thought that the rapture came after the tribulation, and you received a letter from Paul saying that the Day of the Lord had started - would you not be excited beyond words?

Would not thoughts of the soon return of the Lord fill your every waking minute?

The answer is yes. How do we know this? Simple - we are seeing this come to pass now. Overcomers everywhere have but one thought on their minds as the times grow more and more prophetic and dark. It is the thought of the soon return of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ that dominates all we do now.

That said, these scriptures can be parsed down even further, to the core point the Paul is making:

"to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come"

When Paul declares "***that day will not come***" - he is speaking of the Day of the Lord. It becomes obvious when basic language and reading comprehension skills are used.

One of the challenges we face is understanding the conversational tones that were common in those days. However, there is additional proof that Paul was indeed speaking of the Day of the Lord and not the rapture in verse 3. We find it back in the original conversation regarding the rapture in 1 Thessalonians - as evidenced by verse 5.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18: But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, **that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.**

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

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

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

When these verses are taken with the rest of chapter 4 and combined with chapter 5 for context we can see that - as in Matthew 24:36 - that the rapture occurs prior to ANY events that trigger alarm, aside from the warnings of the times and the seasons. Unlike the Second Coming which will have the events of the entire tribulation to foreshadow it, the gathering together will have no advanced warning. Only the signs of the season bear witness that the day is close. Yet we are further admonished to be vigilant as we cannot know the day that this will occur - only that it is close:

1 Thessalonians 5:1-5, 6-7, 8-11: But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

For when they shall say, peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation.

For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

The words "peace and safety" are not a declaration that peace and safety have indeed come. Rather, they are the theme of the day and the calling of the times. Peace and safety are important prophetic clues to discerning the seasons and the soon return to the Lord.

When the world speaks of peace and safety above all things - as it does this very day (even now U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry is working to secure a treaty with Israel to divide the lands for "peace and safety" - this is covered in greater detail in several prior sections of the site) you shall know the end is near. No, this does not declare that peace and safety have come - rather, that the world has reached a point where it will sell its soul just to stop the conflict.

The ESV has a unique perspective that becomes evident in verse 15:

For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, **who are left until the coming of the Lord**, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.

How many of us went for years attributing "those who are alive and remain" simply to the collection of living believers? While that premise holds true, there is a deeper prophetic reference here. Those that are alive and remain are not simply the collection of the living. Rather, they are the remaining roadblock. Stated differently, this is a

confirmation that the rapture is the completion of the First Fruits of the resurrection in Christ, and that the living overcomers are but a tiny remnant of what is occurring. It tells us that the living overcomers are the exception to the rule that it is appointed unto man once to die, then to judgment.

In reality, it declares the living overcomers as a "minor" piece of business that must be handled before the tribulation - or time of wrath can begin. Stated differently, it tells us that those who are alive and remain get a pass on "once to die, then to judgment" simply by being alive when the time of the first resurrection arrives. We discuss this more in a moment.

Also, it should be noted that we are told that in this promise we have both hope and comfort. We do not find comfort in enduring the tribulation (not if we are normal, anyhow). Where then do we find hope and comfort?

Luke 21:36 - Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

1 Thessalonians 5:9-11 - For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

However, the two scriptures before verse 36 raise a few eyebrows as well:

Luke 21:34-35 - And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

It is not a snare to those taken from the earth - but to those that dwell on the earth. A snare is a trap from which there can be no escape. Indeed to those left behind there is no escaping the tribulation. Remember the words of Jesus Christ when he addressed the rapture and those that do not overcome in Matthew 25:30:

And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

A snare indeed!

Now we find ourselves full circle back to 1 Thessalonians 4:13 - But I **would not have you to be ignorant**, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, **even as others which have no hope.**

No, my friends - 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 are not proof of a post-tribulation rapture. Ironically, this conversation gives way to another area of contention - the pre-wrath rapture, or the mid-trib rapture.

On a personal note, for everyone that has convinced themselves that the first half of the tribulation is not a time of wrath answer me this - exactly when is one quarter of the world's population dying from supernatural plagues of God not wrath? I still have not found a single example in the Bible where declared plagues (not even in the same universe as terms of scale with those in the Book of Revelation) were not just that - declared plagues. Even the 144,000 Jews have to watch the run of the four horsemen of the apocalypse. Though they are destined to be sealed and protected, until then they can still feel the effects of the disease, hunger and loss that comes with the horsemen, and are not sealed until chapter 5.

While we are on the subject, the sealing of the 144,000 Jews is yet another evidence that the tribulation starts officially at the sixth seal in chapter 6. They are sealed at the beginning of the seven years and continue the 1,260 days of the two witnesses.

When discussing the subject of wrath, most folks key in on the Wrath of God which is generally agreed to be the second half of the Tribulation. We see the Wrath of God mentioned in Revelation 15:1. This becomes a source of controversy when discussing the timing of the Rapture. Are believers destined to suffer wrath or will they be spared?

The Bible clearly shows that the body of overcoming believers shall be delivered from the wrath to come. Here is a collection of scriptures from both the Old and New Testament that outlines the Lord's principle of escape from wrath:

Luke 21:36 – also alludes to the Bema Judgment (standing before the Son of Man) in Revelation 11:18-19

1 Thessalonians 1:10, Nahum 1:2, 1 Thessalonians 5:9-10, Matthew 3:7, John 3:36, Romans 1:18, Ephesians 5:6.

The entire seven years of the tribulation is a time of wrath. The second half is the wrath of God. This is one of the few points most scholars have always agreed upon. This is further evidenced by scriptures such as Revelation 15:1. What about the first half of the tribulation? Is it a time of wrath? Most will instinctively say “no”. The question becomes “what does the Bible say”?

Revelation 6:16-17 is very revealing:

“And said to the mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sits on the throne, and **from the wrath of THE LAMB: For the great day of his wrath is come;** and who shall be able to stand?”

Did you catch that? The first 42 months are the wrath of the Lamb. The second 42 months are the wrath of God.

Did you know that the Bible gives no less than eight examples of the principle of escape, and clearly demonstrates the doctrine of the pre-tribulation Rapture by proving that God does indeed spare his children? We see the principle clearly demonstrated in the example of:

The days of Noah, confirmed in Hebrews 11:7

The days of Lot, Genesis 18:25, 19:22, 19:29, confirmed in 2 Peter 2:9

The escape from Egypt (Israel), Exodus 12:23, 12:13, 11:6-7

The deliverance of Rahab in Jericho, confirmed in Hebrews 11:31

The escape of the remnant before the destruction of Jerusalem, confirmed in Luke 12:21

Jordan and escape during the Tribulation, Daniel 11:41

The protection of the Jewish people during the Tribulation, Revelation 7:3

And a particular favorite as well as being one of the most clearly spoken is the book of Ezekiel. In Ezekiel the Lord leaves no question as to the nature of the principle of escape for those that remain faithful. Also, it establishes the doctrine of escape as clearly written from the earliest days of the Bible. We can see this demonstrated in Ezekiel 14:13-14, 20.

Now, let us discuss something else. Here is a little trivia for everybody. What do the following scriptures have in common?

Matthew 24:32-33 KJV - Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:

So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.

Mark 13:28-29 KJV - Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near:

So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors.

Matthew 24:34-37 KJV - Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

In these scriptures are two very important things are revealed. At first, it seems that there is a contradiction. In one breath it seems that Jesus is saying that we will know when his return is at hand. However, it also appears that we cannot know the days in which he will return.

So, which is it? The answer will surprise some of you.

Many of you know the connection between the rapture and the Feast of Trumpets. When Jesus said that "no man knows the day, nor hour", it was a direct reference to the Feast of Trumpets that every Jew would have known when they heard this.

You see, the Feast of Trumpets is the only feast day which the start was not known. It was determined by the appearing of the first silver sliver of the new moon. There was a literal 48 hour window where Israel would not know when the Feast, or the first day of the seventh month would start.

Also, the reference to the hour likewise speaks to the Feast of Trumpets. When the two required witnesses presented themselves before the Sanhedrin to confirm that they had seen the moon "reborn", the High Priest would certify the witnesses and give the word.

At that time, trumpets would sound to announce that the new month and the feast had begun. These trumpets would literally sound at night. The first sacrifices would commence to begin the preparation for the services that would commence in the morning.

Those would be the services that most are familiar with when it comes to the rapture.

Now, for the rest of the story.

Have you ever wondered why Jesus used the words "even at the doors" when he spoke this?

Question - what doors?

Remember, there are no accidental words in the Bible. Every word uttered - especially those by the Savior - were specific, with a specific meaning.

That tells us that this was not some random statement to give a certain impression. Just as the number of wise and foolish virgins has a specific meaning, the doors likewise have a meaning.

So, the question remains - what doors?

Turns out, this is the companion understanding to "no man knows the day, nor hour", and to the calling of the Great Assembly.

You see, when the time came to sound the first and last gold trumpets for the calling of the Great Assembly, the King of Israel would head for the doors of the Temple. The High Priest would order them open, and the King himself would sound the gold trumpets.

The first trumpet to "wake the dead" - this proclaimed to the congregation that it was time to awaken, put on their coats and shoes, and assemble at the doors.

The King would then sound the the second and final gold trumpet. This proclaimed to the congregation that it was time to walk through the gates of the Temple and gather for the Great Assembly.

What does this tell us about the timing of the return of the Lord? Simple:

"No man knows the day, nor hour" means exactly that. We do not know the day or hour. It does not speak to any measure of time beyond that, and was a direct reference to the Feast of Trumpets.

Likewise, when Jesus said "at the door", it tells us that those who watch will know that the time has come for the King to emerge from the Temple, sound the gold trumpets, and call the Great Assembly to order.

In other words, "even at the doors" are as close as you can get to the return of the Lord without the actual sounding of the trumpets of God.

Now you know the rest of the story.

We need to discuss the mysteries of God and specifically Revelation 10:6-7 for a moment:

And swear by Him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer:

But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared to his servants the prophets.

This covers a great deal of ground so we will leave it at a basic explanation. This is a reference to the Book of Daniel, Book of Ezekiel and the Book of Zechariah. First, to consume the scroll is to hear, digest and share the prophecies of God concerning Israel. Second, the Book of Revelation tells us that the mystery of God is completed. We discussed the mysteries of God briefly in the section covering Matthew 24. The mysteries of God are those things revealed in the Old Testament through the prophets in pictures, explained through context in the four Gospels and unlocked by key in the New Testament.

Essentially, when you read both Ezekiel and Zechariah you see the prophetic future of Israel -both before Christ and after. Both books present a picture of Israel during the time of Christ and during the tribulation. In both we see the promise of the coming of

Messiah and the events that follow. This is important - in both books a specific sequence is outlined. First the Lord comes for the saints. Second, a time of tribulation arises. Third, the desolation falls upon the Temple. Fourth, Israel is judged for her iniquities. Fifth, Israel is restored through the redemptive work of Messiah.

We discuss the Book of Daniel in a moment.

Revelation 11:17-18 - Saying, we give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because Thou hast taken to Thee thy great power, and hast reigned.

And the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that Thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.

When you read Ezekiel 2:18-21, 4:9-17, chapters 5 through 10 followed by Zechariah chapters 2 through 6 you get the entire picture of the Ten days of Awe as they relate to the time of the tribulation with Ezekiel 4:9-17 and Zechariah chapter 3 specifically speaking to the rapture of the saints (both the barley and the wheat or the church and the Jews).

However, the heart of the rapture of both the church and the 144,000 Jews - as well as the BEMA at the seventh trumpet in Revelation 11 can be found in Ezekiel 3:16-21.

When it comes down to brass tacks we can see the mystery of God revealed in these five scriptures. When we see that the mystery of God is to be finished with the seventh trumpet we see that all of the saints will be completed and called home, followed by the final devastating judgment of Israel in the Great Tribulation. There is one final warning

given by God when He declares that the mystery is finished - a final warning that we shall cover in greater detail later on.

Ezekiel 3:20 - Again, when a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling-block before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

Stated differently, the completion of the mystery of God is the declaration that at the seventh trumpet the last piece of the puzzle shall fall into place. The last of the righteous shall be called home to stand before Christ (this is completed when the First Fruits of the wheat harvest are presented at the Temple of God with the rapture of both the 144,000 Jews and the two witnesses).

The Holy Spirit is brought home (this is why angels now announce warnings upon the earth and not the Holy Spirit), darkness descends fully upon the earth (again, no Holy Spirit or church) and Israel comes full circle into her final phase of prophecy - final judgment.

After the seventh trumpet there are no more mysteries of God. Those that remain on the earth are now truly alone. No aid from the Holy Spirit, no miracles of God (aside from devastating judgments) - nothing but vile darkness and death. Those that remain are left to their own devices and for the first time in the history of mankind salvation becomes an issue of works.

You will have to work and struggle every second of every waking day to accept the Gospel of Christ - let alone follow it. At any moment your life may be called of you through the judgments or martyrdom. So long as you push through the madness and keep your mind constantly upon Christ - and I mean constantly - you will be held alive until you can be martyred or make it to the end. However, one slip, just one moment of

weakness and their will be no stopping you from perishing at the hands of the judgments. If this happens you lose.

Saints (what few are left and stand firm) die through the martyrdom alone - or they do not die. Any other fate and you are lost forever.

But wait - there is more!

Credit for what I am going to share next goes squarely to Perry Stone, as he is the first (to my knowledge) to really go into detail on the mysteries of God, and what you are about to discover.

I mentioned earlier that we would cover the Book of Daniel. Here is where Daniel comes into the picture on the mysteries of God.

Let us start with a question - is the last trump in Revelation the only "last trump" in the Bible? Here is why I ask. When Paul tells us "at the sound of the last trump", he never defines what the last trump actually is.

Why is this important? Simple - it is the heart of the argument most use to deny the pre-tribulation rapture. Consider this:

Paul wrote of the last trump 40 to 45 years before the revelation of seven angels with seven trumpets was given to John. This is critical to understand.

When the Bible reveals something, one of two conditions will exist. Either it is already known or a picture exists in the Law of Moses. Otherwise the Bible will define the revelation at the time it is given. How many times are the words "here is the meaning" or "here is the interpretation" mentioned in the Bible?

Yet, Paul never clarifies what the last trump was. He did not have to. He was already speaking to Jewish believers at Corinth, that knew exactly what the last trump was. They knew because they already lived the last trump year in and year out - at the Feast of Trumpets.

Colossians 2:16-17 KJV - Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:

Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

Most believers that want to deny the Jewish origins of the faith and the feast days that they may deny the rapture fail to realize that these two scriptures even exist.

Consider this also - the Corinthian believers never write back to Paul to ask about this "mysterious last trump". Given the earth shattering nature of what Paul is speaking, clarification would be required if the subject matter was unknown.

It was not unknown - it was already a part of daily Jewish life.

Not only that, but the last trump also ties directly into "no man knows the day, nor hour" and "even at the door". All three of these scriptures are the perfect revelation of the soon return of the Lord and the connection to the Feast of Trumpets.

Did you know that the Bible gives no less than 60 examples of trumpets being used? Did you know that each of these examples has a last trump (some are examples of the only trump)?

Remember this - when Paul wrote of the last trump to the Corinthians, no one had ever heard of the seventh angel and the seventh trumpet.

1 Corinthians 15:51-52 KJV - Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

Consider the following scriptures also:

Revelation 10:6-7 KJV - And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer:

But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.

I want to draw your attention to something. Who was the mystery of God shown to? Here is why I ask. Those the scoff at the pre-tribulation rapture declare this to be the mystery that Paul spoke about in 1 Corinthians 15:51-52. However, we know that this is not the case. How? The Bible tells us exactly who the mystery was given to, and it was not Paul.

It was the prophets.

"as he hath declared to his servants the prophets."

It is critical that you understand this. Here is why. We have seen an angel and a mystery before. It is in the Book of Daniel.

Daniel 12:4, 8-9 KJV - But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river.

And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?

And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.

And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?

And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

When will all these things be finished? When the power of the holy people is shattered. That is Israel. **Notice this - it did not say they are finished - it says they will be finished. We see from Daniel chapter 12 that the reference in Revelation chapter 10 is indeed a double reference. It refers to the the things that are finished at the blowing of the seventh trumpet, which we covered in this same article. It also tells us that there is a mystery of God that is now to be finished as well. This mystery is found in the Book of Daniel.**

That is why the Bible tells us that the mystery of God was revealed to the prophets - plural.

Daniel 12:4 KJV - But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

Revelation 10:7 KJV - But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.

By now, some of you see where this is going. It is absolutely amazing how the Lord works!

Let us venture a bit further into Revelation chapter 10:

Revelation 10:8-11 KJV - And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.

And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.

And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.

And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.

This is the same angel that spoke to Daniel. Here, the angel gives John a book and tells him to eat. The book is honey to his mouth, yet bitter to his belly.

Now, John must complete the revelation and prophesy more. He is to complete the mystery shown to Daniel, yet not understood by Daniel. A mystery which was written by Daniel, yet sealed and not revealed - until now. John can see what Daniel saw. However, this time, the mystery is not sealed. John is told to prophesy and reveal what he is seeing. The time is now at hand for the mystery to be revealed.

Daniel is told that in a time, times and a dividing of times that the mystery would be finished. In the middle of the tribulation period, the same angel raises his right hand, declares the mystery of God finished, tells John to eat the book - and now John sees what is now to be:

The coming of the Antichrist and the False Prophet, the rise of the beast kingdom - and the power to continue for a time, times and half a time.

In the Book of Daniel, the prophet sees four beasts. The first three are described in their appearance, and they are known. However, the fourth beast is of an unknown appearance. We are given iron teeth, seven heads and ten horns. Nothing more. There is no description of what the fourth beast looks like.

Then in Revelation John eats the sealed book. From there, John prophesies on things that were still a mystery moments earlier. He speaks of the Two Witnesses in chapter 11. He speaks of the Dragon cast to earth in chapter 12. In chapter 13 John reveals the beast that Daniel saw, but could not describe. Here is the great fourth beast that Daniel saw:

Revelation 13:1-10 KJV - And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.

And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.

John reveals that this final beast was of the first three in Daniel. He also sees the nature of how it rises. It moves as swift as the leopard, hits as hard as the bear, and rips its enemies apart like a lion - with terrible iron teeth. It likewise speaks unbelievable things. Now, the following scriptures come full circle:

And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.

And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

This is exactly what we are watching rise with ISIS in Iraq and Syria - which is ancient Babylon. Remember, verses one through four do not tell us when the beast rises, only what it will look like when it does rise. It is only AFTER all of these things (verses 1 through 4) are complete that the beast is finally ready for what comes in verse five.

The power to rule the earth for 42 months.

Also, while the deadly wound that was healed may be a reference to an assassination attempt, it is a direct reference to proof of what we are now seeing in Iraq and Syria.

Revelation 17:7-8 KJV - And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.

The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

In John's day, there was only one prior empire that fit the description of "was, and is not, and shall be" - Babylon. When John received the Book of Revelation there were still Assyrian, Egyptians, Persians, Greeks and Romans. There were, however, no Babylonians. The Babylonian Empire had long since been conquered and absorbed by subsequent empires. The ruthlessness of the Persians, the Hellenization of Greece and the assimilation of Rome had left what was once Babylon devoid of its ancient identity. To this day we see the very same thing. All of the ancient empires of the Bible have

lands and ethnic groups that proudly extol the virtues of their ancient cultures. Only Babylon has no modern equivalent.

That was until Saddam Hussein began to resurrect the ancient roots of land of Iraq. This is a resurrection that came full circle when ISIS ripped ancient Babylon from the grave, in the exact manner the Bible foretold, with the world marveling exactly as the Bible foretold - with the exact same map that Daniel would have declared as Babylon.

Everything we have discussed so far can be summed up in the following statements:

The beast was born of long dead Babylon. Soon, it will start to grow.

The world sat in stunned wonder over the beast. It declared that there is none like the beast, and that none can make war with it.

The beast moves swiftly, devouring its enemies and hitting them like a hammer - much as the bear both pounds with its paws and rips with its teeth. It will be fearsome as the lion.

Soon, this resurrected Babylonian Empire will consume the whole of the Persian, Greek and Roman Empires.

Then shall fall the final piece - Israel.

Only then, with the power of the holy people of Israel broken, the beast - finally ready - shall receive power over all kindred, tongues and nations for 42 months. . .

A time, times and dividing of times.

The mystery of God to be finished at the blowing of the 7th trumpet is not the rapture. It is the Great Tribulation now revealed - now to come to terrible completion.

God shows John the rest of the Book of Daniel - which Daniel could not understand. But now, that book is revealed to John - for the church!

Prophetic time is now complete. All that remains from this point is a time, times and a dividing of times. . .

In 42 months it all ends.

Moving forward, one of the more confusing aspects to the New Testament and the Book of Revelation is the use of the word "saints". This word is plastered throughout Revelation leading to a natural assumption that the church must indeed endure the tribulation. However, a closer examination reveals that the word saints is applied to the church, the Old Testament prophets and those that will have their robes washed white during the tribulation for the testimony of Christ. We see this demonstrated in the two Hebrew words used for saints in the Bible – "kodesh" and "hagios".

That brings up another interesting distinction in Revelation. Have you ever noticed the difference in the clothing of those that stand before the Throne of God in Revelation? Whenever we see those that are martyred in the Tribulation they are clothed in white robes that had to be washed before they could stand before the Throne. However, there is a second group of people, present from the very beginning of chapter 4 that wear the white raiment of the priesthood of heaven. This is the very same raiment worn by the Lord Jesus Christ.

The martyrs are clothed in white robes which are STOLE in Greek, Revelation 6:11, 7:9-14. The Church and the elders are clothed in the white linen raiment of the priesthood which are HIMATION in Greek, Revelation 3:5, 3:18, 4:4. Exodus chapter

28 outlines and confirms the white linen raiment of the priesthood. Revelation 3:5 – in the letters to the seven churches – confirms the white linen raiment to be given to the church.

This is a good time to point out a tidbit that gets overlooked. It is generally accepted that the Book of Revelation is a three part revelation. It is divided into the things that were (chapter 1), the things that are (chapters 2 and 3) and the things to come. The Lord covers a great deal of ground starting in chapter 4. However, there is one thing that is glaringly absent once we start chapter 4.

There are no direct references to the church after chapter 3 (in the Greek “ecclesia” or “ekklesia”). There are references to the saints that must have their robes washed through martyrdom, yet no mention of the church as a body on earth. It is clear that the church on earth is an understood concept as there are two entire chapters in Revelation devoted to the church (chapters 2 and 3). The question becomes “why”?

The answers rest in the appearance of the 24 elders in chapter 4. Have you ever wondered about the elders? Most simply pass these references over. The natural assumption is angel or “some kind of elder” with no cognizance of where they came from. We see their appearance in Revelation 4:4.

Here are a few interesting tidbits regarding the 24 elders:

They are described with the Greek word “presbuteros” which translates as “a senior in the church”. It is also the root for presbyter, a term many are already familiar with, see Acts 14:23

They are dressed in the white raiment of the priesthood, Revelation 3:5, 3:18, 6:11, and 7:9

They are wearing the “stephanos”, or Greek for victor’s crowns, Revelation 4:4, 10 - set upon their heads from the very beginning. As we detailed in the sections regarding the judgments, there is a crown awarded to those that love the appearing of the Lord. It is likewise set upon the heads of those that live a righteous life upon the earth.

This crown of righteousness is awarded at the BEMA, yet here we see that those that held fast to the promise of the coming of the Lord walk through the gates of heaven wearing the white raiment and the crown of righteousness for their faith in the promise of His coming. It is the only crown of the overcomers that is granted prior to the BEMA.

Nowhere in the Bible are angels ever addressed as, or considered elders – this is a term applied only to human beings.

The elders clearly identify themselves as redeemed by Christ, Galatians 3:13, Revelation 5:9

Matthew 19:28 clearly identifies the 12 Apostles as the 12 new covenant elders that shall sit upon 12 thrones and judging the 12 tribes of Israel. We also know that the 12 sons of Israel shall likewise sit as twelve elders and judges. The 12 sons of Israel judge the nation born of the old covenant and the 12 Apostles judge the nation born of the new covenant.

We have a final confirmation of this in Revelation 21:12, 14 as we see that the names of the twelve sons of Israel and the twelve apostles have their names carved upon the foundations of the New Jerusalem and the twelve gates.

There is a reason why the church is never again specifically mentioned after chapter 3. Beginning in chapter 4 the church is now present in heaven – no longer as the church, but as the bride. This is further evidenced by the commencement of the Bema

(Revelation 11:18) at the beginning of the mid-point of the tribulation and the appearing of the seven sealed books in chapter 5 (more on this in a moment).

There is another point in chapter 4 that either gets overlooked or it gets downplayed as applying only to John the Revelator:

Revelation 4:1 - After this I looked, and, behold, **a door was opened in heaven**: and the first voice which I heard was as it **were of a trumpet** talking with me; which said, **Come up hither**, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.

As I said, this is either overlooked or downplayed. However, when taken with the other scriptures regarding the rapture, or the gathering together it becomes clear that this is a key lock verse that establishes the timing of the tribulation and the Book of Revelation.

However, never one to leave us to wonder about such things, God establishes a confirmation later in the Book of Revelation to solidify the rapture in verse 4:1. We see this confirmation in Revelation 11:11-12 - And after three days and an half the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.

Did you catch that? We know that the same terminology in verse 4:1 does not refer to the witnesses as chapter 11 establishes the rapture of the witnesses as the second woe upon mankind. Furthermore, we see additional evidence in verse 18 in the same chapter with the BEMA, or the judgment seat of Christ for which all believers must be present:

And the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, **and that Thou shouldest give reward unto Thy servants the**

prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear Thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.

We receive yet a third confirmation Revelation 14:1-5:

And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the **Mount Sion**, and with Him an **hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father's name written in their foreheads**.

And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, **which were redeemed from the earth**.

These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. **These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb**.

And in their mouth was found no guile: for **they are without fault before the throne of God**.

Notice that the 144,000 witnesses are already redeemed from the earth - past tense. We have iron clad evidence that they were also raptured as these scriptures declare them as Firstfruits to God and the Lamb.

To recap - verse 4:1 is the rapture of the overcoming believers as the church is never again mentioned in the Book of Revelation, though they are clearly addressed in two complete chapters of Revelation prior to 4:1. Second, we see the rapture of the two witnesses in chapter 11 with a clear chronological establishment that their rapture occurs after the first woe upon mankind, and gives us the second woe. Third, we see

the 144,000 witnesses in chapter 14, which follows immediately after the BEMA judgment at the end of chapter 11. Chronologically, chapter 14 picks up where chapter 11 leaves off. While the exact timing of the rapture of the 144,000 is not given, we see that immediately following the BEMA they are already in heaven. Also, the 144,000 are not separated and sealed until chapter 7 - well after verse 4:1.

There is yet another evidence that we must address as proof of the pre-tribulation rapture. The seven sealed book is the testament of John delivered to the seven churches as commanded by the Lord and we see an application of this in Jeremiah 32. We see further similarities in the scrolls in Ezekiel 2:9-10.

Here is the critical piece of the puzzle - in the Law of Moses the seven seals can only be broken in the presence of those that sealed them. Likewise, in Roman law this was a requirement. In the days of Jesus Christ all legally binding contracts were sealed. Only those that sealed the scroll could break the seal, or by someone that legally bore the seal used for the scroll. In such a case the breaking of the seals must be witnessed by those present when the seals were applied.

This was the seven pastors of the seven churches that John was commanded to present the Book of Revelation to. While the Bible declares seven angels of seven seals, we know that angels are a designation that is also used to denote a human messenger. We know that these seven angels are indeed human messengers as they correct John in later chapters of Revelation for bowing to worship them. They admonish him for bowing and confirm that they are redeemed servant of Christ the same as John.

Revelation 19:10 - And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, see thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

Revelation 22:8-9 - And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.

Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.

Also, never forget the wearing of the white raiment. This is the garment of the priesthood, now seen on the church which are a kingdom of priests unto Christ. The difference between the white raiment worn by the church, the elders and Christ, and the white robes are an irrefutable proof of the pre-tribulation rapture. Remember, there are no misplaced or errant words in the Bible. Every word is completely accurate and correct. The fact that God clearly distinguishes between the two sets of garments can not be ignored. They are different for a reason.

Now, here are three scriptures that are almost always missed when discussing the rapture:

Hebrews 12:22-23 - But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

Understand first that there is a difference between Mt. Zion and Mt. Sion. Mt. Zion is Jerusalem on earth. However, Mt. Sion is the heavenly Temple of God. Whenever any reference is made to Mt. Sion it is a reference to Heaven and the Throne Room of God.

Here we see the general assembly, the church of the first born or the first fruits, the company of angels and the spirits of just men made perfect. This perfection occurs ONLY after the resurrection of the dead in Christ. We can know that these scriptures indeed speak of the promise of the coming of Jesus Christ as it was established in the first two scriptures in this chapter:

Hebrews 12:1-2 - Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, **let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,**

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the Throne of God.

Also, it should be noted once more that faith in Christ and His promises are indeed central to overcoming as shown here.

Now, did you know that there are eight different Greek words found in the New Testament that point to the pre-tribulation rapture?

1. Paralambano – “To receive to oneself” or “to take to” – John 14:3

2. Parousia – “A coming, arrival, or being alongside of” – Philippians 1:26, 2 Thessalonians 2:9, James 5:7

3. Apokalupsis – “An uncovering, a laying bare, a revelation or revealing” – Colossians 3:4, Luke 17:30, 2 Thessalonians 1:7, 1 Peter 4:13

4. Epiphaneia – “To bring forth to light, to cause to shine forth”, “daybreak or dawn” – 2 Thessalonians 2:8, 1 Timothy 6:14, 2 Timothy 1:10, 4:1

5. Rhuomai – “To draw to oneself”, “to rescue and deliver” – 1 Thessalonians 1:10

6. Harpazo – “Caught up, seize upon with force, snatch up” – 1 Thessalonians 4:17

7. Episunagoge – “Gathering together”, “assembly” – 2 Thessalonians 2:1

8. Allasso – “To change, to transform, to exchange” – 1 Corinthians 15:51

If you go to the scriptures listed above and apply the meaning of the original language you get an indisputable picture of the pre-tribulation rapture.

This is a good time to revisit the subject of deliverance from wrath. Here is a listing of various scriptures that prove an escape from the wrath to come – both the wrath of the Lamb and the wrath of God:

Revelation 6:16-17 - And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

Revelation 15:1 - And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.

Here are scriptures that confirm deliverance from wrath for the overcomer:

Isaiah 13:9

Nahum 1:2

Matthew 3:7

John 3:36

Romans 1:18

Ephesians 5:6

Romans 2:5-10

Luke 21:36

1 Thessalonians 1:10, 5:9-10

Romans 5:9

With this I think we have covered enough ground for now. While we have discussed many evidences for the pre-tribulation rapture on this page and the discussion page on Matthew 24 – as well as the lightning revelation – this is by no means the end of the discussion.

We could publish several more pages of greater length than these three with additional rapture evidences. Not the least would be an in depth study of the Book of Remembrance, the Passover Feast, the Ancient Jewish Wedding, the complete breakdown of the harvest cycles, the rain seasons and more pictures of the rapture in

the Old Testament. Some of these things are touched on in the other pages, but the lion's share of the really awe inspiring details have not been covered.

Let there be no mistaking the evidence – there is a rapture and it is pre-tribulation. If you do not have faith in the promise of the coming of Christ – the pre-trib rapture (belief in the mid-trib rapture or post-trib rapture is the same thing as no belief in the rapture as it strips Christ of faith in His coming and power as God) – then you do not go in the rapture.

To miss the rapture is to risk eternal damnation. If you could not find it to overcome for Christ, or find faith in His promises then you stand little chance of doing so when your life is required for admission to heaven.

That's only if you survive the rapture.

Every effort has been made to document each source that was reviewed,

consulted and quoted in the production of Tribulation Rising. However, the research for this project extends back for more than 20 years.

It is simply not possible to document every source that contributed to this material.

The bibliographical information presented here represents our best effort to compile as many of the sources as possible. This was an effort that began in earnest once the direction for this project was made known by the Lord.

There are more contributors represented in this material than we have the ability to thank individually. To that end, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to all of the faithful scholars that have heard the voice of the Lord, and completed the task He placed before them.

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