

The Pre-Tribulation Rapture

A Study in Eschatology

Ten Reasons that it Must Be Before the Tribulation

I. The Absence of the Church in the Revelation after the third chapter till Jesus returns

A. The word "church" occurs 19x in Revelation 1-3 and never again till 22:16

B. The word "bride" (4x) and "wife" (2x) all occur AFTER the tribulation, when Jesus comes back with His armies, etc...

C. The Bride is His returning army in Rev 19:6-9 cf 11-14 (cf 17:14)

II. The Overcomers Promises in the Revelation

A. The church was to "overcome" - Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21; 21:7

B. John also wrote 1 John 5:4-5, which tells us what it means to overcome.

C. But notice Revelation 13:1-7. Obviously, this set of people called "saints" are not the same as the people in the church because we are supposed to overcome.

D. There are two sets of people that God has dealt with over the years. The believers and physical Israel. The word "saints" simply means those "set apart." These saints in Revelation 13 are physical Israel, who still have a future in God's economy. They are also "the elect" of Matthew 24: 14f. The context of Revelation suggests the distinction is still valid and pronounced.

III. The "He who has ears" passages are altered after the third chapter

A. Consider the "He who has ears" passages in Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22

1. They consist of two clauses:

a. "He that hath an ear, let him hear"

b. "What the Spirit saith unto the churches"

B. Now consider Revelation 13:9. The saying is drastically altered to "if any man have an ear, let him hear."

1. Notice that the first clause is changed.

2. Notice that the second clause is altogether absent.

a. The assumption is that perhaps there are none who will hear

b. It's also relevant that "the Spirit" is missing. This is during the Tribulation and this coincides with what we'll see later in II Thessalonians concerning the removal of the "restrainer."

IV. The Promise to the church to be kept from the time of a trial coming

A. The promise of Revelation 3:10 applies to all Christians in the same way that Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, etc...applies.

B. The church is promised to be kept from wrath: I Thess 1:10; 5:9.

V. The argument of His imminent return

A. The teachings of Jesus:

1. Matt 24:32-51; 25:13

2. Mark 13:28-37

3. Luke 12:35-40; 21:29-36

B. The teachings of Paul:

1. I Cor 1:7

2. Philippians 3:20-21; 4:5

3. I Thess 1:10

C. The teaching of Peter

1. I Peter 4:7

VI. The Devastation of the plagues will leave few to rapture

- A. The fourth seal kills 1/4 of mankind, Rev 6:7-8
- B. A vast multitude of believers will die in martyrdom, Rev 6:9-11 (cf 7:9-17)
- C. The sixth trumpet kills another 1/3 of mankind, Rev 9:15
- D. Many unnumbered die in the various cataclysmic phenomena of Revelation.
- E. Q: Is it any wonder why Jesus said "Except those days be shortened..." (Matt 24:22)?

VII. The logical problems in the Revelation

- A. Rev. 8:13 demands that "those who inhabit the earth" be all inclusive
- B. Rev 9:18-21 implies that the living (v20) needed repentance
- C. Rev 13:8 tells us that all who dwell on earth will...
 - 1. Do homage to Antichrist
 - 2. Don't have their names written in the Lamb's book of life

VIII. The prophecy of Isaiah 26:19-21

- A. This speaks of the resurrection - v19
- B. This speaks of a hiding until the indignation is over - v20
- C. This indignation is God's wrath upon the inhabitants of earth -v21
 - 1. These are literally "dwellers" on the earth.
 - 2. Q: Where is "thy chambers" of v20?
 - 3. Will the resurrection (v19) take place before the "indignation" (v20-21)?

IX. The enigma of II Thessalonians 2:1-7

- A. Why would the Thessalonians have been distressed if the day of the

Lord had come?

1. Is it because they didn't want to go through the Tribulation? But if they were supposed to go through it, it should have given them the comfort of knowing Jesus was not too far behind.

2. But if they were NOT supposed to go through it, then it would have caused the distress that it did.

a. Because Paul misled them to believe that they wouldn't go through the Tribulation, and...

b. Because Paul had told them that the rapture would have taken place first.

B. What then is the chronology and flow of thought in II Thessalonians?

1. I want to discuss with you the coming of Jesus concerning the Rapture - v1

2. That you don't get worried over some lie that the Day of the Lord has already come - v2

3. Don't let anyone deceive you. The DAY OF THE LORD won't come until there is an apostasy and the Antichrist be revealed, that one who will think he's some kind of god [this is the *Abomination of Desolations*] - vv3-4

4. You guys should remember this. I told you what is holding him back from being revealed even now - vv5-6

5. Sin is already all about us. Only he who now restrains will keep the Antichrist from being revealed till he is removed [Q: Who is the restrainer?] - v7

6. After the restrainer is removed, Antichrist will do his thing and then be destroyed, etc... vv8f

X. The Typology of Scripture

A. Noah was removed from the area being destroyed: the earth

B. Lot was removed from the area being destroyed: Sodom

C. They didn't survive through it: they were taken out of it.