

Prophetic Fall Feasts of The LORD

May 8, 2009 Lesson #18 Rapture Versus 2nd Coming

Consider: Many teach the Rapture and the Second Coming of Christ are one and the same event. They are similar but separate end-time events, with separate participants, different times, purposes and locations which involve Jesus returning.

It is Vitally Important to recognize the differences. Why?

- 1) If the rapture and the second coming are the same event, living believers of the Church will have to go through the tribulation [I Thessalonians 5:9; Revelation 3:10].
- 2) Church Age believers are SEALED with the Holy Spirit. Believers during the Trib. are not sealed. The Holy Spirit operates again as in the OT. Would we become "unsealed"?
- 3) If the rapture and the second coming are the same event, the return of Christ is not imminent—there are many things which must occur before He can return [Matthew 24:4-30].
- 3) In describing the Tribulation Period, Revelation chapters 6-19 nowhere mentions the church.
- 4) During the tribulation—also called "the time of trouble for Jacob" [Jeremiah 30:7], God will again turn His primary attention to Israel [Romans 11:17-31].

The New Testament Records 2 Detailed Descriptions Of The Lord's Return.

Paul > I Thess. 4:13-18

John > Revelation 19:11-16

<p>13. I <u>do not want you to be ignorant</u>, brethren concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.</p>	<p>11. Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.</p>
<p>14. For <u>IF</u> we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus</p>	<p>12. His eyes <i>were</i> like a flame of fire, and on His head <i>were</i> many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself.</p>
<p>15. For this we say to you by the <u>Word Of The Lord</u>, that we who are alive <i>and</i> remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.</p>	<p>13. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.</p>
<p>16. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trump of God. And the <u>DEAD IN CHRIST will rise first</u>.</p>	<p>14. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. [See Rev. 19:8]</p>
<p>17. Then we who are alive <i>and</i> 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.</p>	<p>15. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.</p>

18. Therefore <u>comfort one another</u> with these words.	16. And He has on <i>His</i> robe and on <i>His</i> thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.
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Although both passages focus on Jesus, the similarity ends there.

4 things Paul said in I Thess. 4:13-18

1. God doesn't want His Church ignorant on the subject of the rapture.
2. Paul was giving us the WORD of the LORD.
3. Jesus said dead believers will be raised and the living believers will be caught up with them.
4. Jesus said comfort one another about this.

Characteristics Unique to I Thess. 4:13-18

1. Jesus appears in the heavens. He brings with Him the spirit and soul of those who have died in Him during the Church Age. (Birth of Church at Pentecost > Rapture)
2. Jesus descends with a shout, with the voice of an archangel. & the Trump of God
3. The dead IN CHRIST (baptized by the Holy Spirit > began in Acts 2) are resurrected.

Characteristics Unique to Rev. 19:11-16

1. The 7 year tribulation period is coming to an end.
2. All the angels and saints in Heaven are shouting "Hallelujah" because the kingdom of the Antichrist has been destroyed. It is time for Jesus to come to earth. (Rev. 19:1-6)
3. Jesus & His Bride return to earth in glory, riding white horses. [Come down to earth]
4. Christ returns as a warrior to "judge and wage war" against the enemies of God.
5. He returns as an avenger to pour out the wrath of God on those who have rejected God's love and grace.
6. He returns as king to "strike down the nations" and "rule them with a rod of iron."

Summary> I Thess. 4:13-18

Rev. 19:11-16

1. Jesus appears in the heavens.	1. Jesus returns to earth. Zech. 14
2. Jesus comes for His Church. [Out]	2. Jesus returns WITH His Bride. **
3. Jesus is a Deliverer.	3. Jesus is a Warrior.
4. Jesus appears in grace.	4. Jesus returns in wrath.
5. Jesus appears as a bridegroom.	5. Jesus returns as King of the world.

****The Lord Returns To The Earth With His Church Not For His Church**

Jude talks about Enoch who is a type of a Christian living in the days before the Law of Moses. Gen. 5:24 Enoch walks with God and one day God took him up and out of here in a type of the Rapture. Enoch was not Jewish and had no connection to Israel of any kind. He prophesied that at the 2nd Coming, Jesus Christ will return *with* His redeemed saints already in tow.

Jude 1:14 "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,"

The Two Openings Of The Door In Heaven

In Revelation, Heaven is opened two times. Both of them are connected with the Church.

1. John, who is a type of the Church, is taken up to Heaven in a type of the Rapture.
Rev. 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."

2. The redeemed saints already in Heaven mount up on white horses and return with Jesus at the Second Coming.

Rev. 19:11 "And I saw heaven opened and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war."

Scriptures Outside These 2 Detailed Comings: Digging For More Evidence

A. The Day Of The Rapture Of The Church Is Imminent & Unknown

The Day The Lord Returns At The Second Coming Is Mentioned With Signs

Paul's writings do not mention the date but he gives some clues. The believers were fearful they were living in the day of the Tribulation Period. They thought they had missed the Rapture that Paul had taught them in I Thessalonians. Paul reassures them the Tribulation cannot come unless...

II Thess. 2:1-3 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, [the Rapture] "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. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, [7 year Tribulation] except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;" *Pre-Tribulation Rapture*

Daniel, Matthew & John give us the time frame of the Second Coming.

Daniel 9:27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week [7 years]: and in the midst of the week [3 ½ years] he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

Matt. 24:15-16 Jesus said, When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

¹⁶ Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:

Rev. 12:6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days. [3 ½ years]

B. The Rapture Happens Before The Antichrist & The Tribulation Period
The Second Coming Happens After Both

Paul stresses repeatedly that one of the incredible benefits of being taken out in the Rapture is that you miss the entire wrath of the Great Tribulation.

I Thess. 5:9 "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ," [Salvation = soteria #4991 = deliverance, preservation, safety]

Matt. 24:29-30 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." The Second Coming

C. The Rapture Only The Church Sees & Hears The Lord Come For Them.
The Second Coming The Whole World Witnesses It.

Rapture = The redeemed hear the Shout of the Lord when He calls us up to be with Him in the air.

I Thess. 4:17 "Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." *The Rapture*
Second Coming = Jesus appears in JUDGMENT to the whole world.

Rev. 1:7 "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen." *2nd Coming*

D. Rapture No angels are sent to gather the church
Second coming Angels do all the gathering for judgment

Jesus Himself comes to gather His Church. We hear His Shout, and "in the twinkling of an eye" we are gone. No angels mentioned anywhere. [I Thess. 4:13-18]

I Thess. 4:16-17 "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.

I Cor. 15:52 "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." *The Rapture*

Matt. 24:30-31 "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." *Second Coming*

E. People Will Rejoice At The Rapture Apostle Paul
The World Will Mourn At The 2nd Coming Matthew

Consider: Matthew 24:29-31 is the hands down favorite passage of Pre-trib Rapture deniers yet contained in those passages is the very proof that the Rapture of the Church and the Second Coming are two separate events. Matthew paints a picture of stark terror and physical judgments falling upon the Earth.

Matt. 24:29-31 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

Paul talks about none of these things being connected with the Rapture of the Church. Furthermore, Paul says in the Rapture that Jesus comes for us personally and pulls us up into the clouds with Him. [I Thess. 4:16-18] Paul also says that we receive a new body that is fashioned just like the "glorious body" the Lord Jesus Christ himself was given at his resurrection.

I Cor. 15:51-52 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.

F. At The Rapture, Believers Are Given A Glorified Body.
At The 2nd Coming They Remain In Earthly Bodies As They Enter The Millennial Kingdom.

At the Rapture of the Church, great personal and physical change takes place for the believer. We receive a new body that is fashioned just like the "glorious body" the Lord Jesus Christ Himself was given at His Resurrection. Wow, imagine that!

Phil. 3:20-21 "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." *The Rapture*

At the Second Coming, as Jesus sets up His earthly government from Jerusalem, the people who made it through the Tribulation have no special bodies.

Isa. 65:20-21 There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner *being* an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit *them*; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them." *The Second Coming*

G. The Rapture

The Church Is Taken To Heaven,

The Second Coming

Jesus Sets Up Earthly Rule.

At the Second Coming, a 1000 year kingdom of Jesus Christ is established on Earth.

Church Age Believers are never promised an earthly home, but an heavenly one.

The Nation of Israel and Tribulation saints were promised an earthly kingdom.

John 14:2-3 "In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were not so*, I would have told you.

I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there ye may be also.*" *Rapture*

Rev. 20:4b "and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." *The Second Coming*

H. Famine, War And Pestilence Follow The Rapture.

1,000 Years Of World Peace Follows The Second Coming.

After the Rapture, a time of unbelievable suffering is ushered in, the time of Jacob's Trouble (Jer. 30:7). The doctrine of the Rapture was unknown to them at this time and would not be revealed until Paul, ~30 years from the writing of Matthew.

Matt. 24:3, 6-8 "And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows."

But after the Second Coming, a 1,000 reign of the Lord Jesus Christ in Jerusalem brings a world peace.

Isa. 11:6-10 "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea. And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious." *The Second Coming*

I. The Judgment Seat of Christ follows the Rapture.

The Judgment of nations follows the Second Coming.

This is not a judgment on sin.

II Cor. 5:10 "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." The Rapture

Rom. 14:12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

2nd Coming: Matt. 25:44-46 "Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these [goats] shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous [sheep] into life eternal."

J. The Rapture Is The 'Blessed Hope'

The Second Coming Is A Day To Be Greatly Feared.

Titus 2:13 Paul calls the Rapture "the Blessed Hope", a day of great comfort and joy.

"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ;"

Amos 5:18 Talks about the Day of the Lord, which is the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, Woe unto you that desire the day of the LORD! to what end is it for you?

the day of the LORD is darkness, and not light. [2nd Coming]

Isa. 13:9 "Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it." [2nd Coming]

Read Joel 3 for more on the ferocity and woefulness of the 2nd Coming.

K. After The Rapture & Judgment Seat, There Is The Marriage Of The Lamb

At The Time Of The Second Coming, Jesus Returns From A Wedding

Luke says that when Jesus returns for His people Israel at the Second Coming, He has already been to a wedding.

Luke 12:35-36 "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. *Second Coming*

Paul tells us that after the Rapture of the Church we meet the Lord for the great Marriage.

II Cor. 11:2 "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." *The Pretribulation Rapture*

This event has nothing to do with Israel and is for the Church only.

At the Second Coming this event has already taken place.

Rev. 19:7-9 "Let us be glad and rejoice and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

Rev. 19:11,14 "And I saw heaven opened and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. And the armies *which were* in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean."

Further Biblical Support For Pre-Tribulation Rapture:

1. John records the angels will withhold their threatened judgment during the Tribulation until they first supernaturally Seal The "Servants Of God" to protect them from the coming wrath of God.

Rev. 7:3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have SEALED the Servants Of Our God in their foreheads.

- These are the 144,000. However, all true believers are also "the servants of God."

I Pet. 2:15-16 For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: ¹⁶ As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness [cover up for evil], but as the Servants Of God.

Question: Why would God supernaturally seal the 144,000 Jews but leave hundreds of millions of Christians unprotected from His coming wrath?

- ❖ The only logical reason for not protecting the millions of "servants of God" > They will no longer require supernatural protection because they will have been raptured before the wrath of God is poured out during the Tribulation period.
2. Church Age: There is no difference between Jew & Greek. [Rom. 10:12]
All born-again believers are "one in Christ."
 - ❖ However, the prophecies of Daniel, Matthew, II Thess., and Revelation on the 7 year Tribulation focus repeatedly on Israel, Jerusalem, the Jews and their separate identity from the surrounding Gentile nations.
 - ❖ Prophetic passages focus on: The Jews, Israel fleeing into the wilderness, the rebuilt Temple, resuming the animal sacrifices, purifying of the Levites, Antichrist's claim to be Israel's Messiah, the False Prophet bringing down fire from heaven in imitation of the prophet Elijah, the Law and the 144,000 Jewish witnesses.
 - ❖ ALL of the above concern Israel & not the Church.

3. Paul affirmed the importance of the imminent return of Christ.

I Thess. 2:19 For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?

- His words of hope and joy consistent with his compelling teaching that the rapture of the Church will deliver born-again believers into the presence of Christ.

- The terms hope, joy, crown of rejoicing would be inappropriate if Paul thought he had to prepare believers living in the last days for the coming wrath of God which they would have to endure for 7 years.

4. Listen to Jesus' words in John 11:23-26 regarding the death of Lazarus.

Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

²⁵ Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

- Group 1 = Believers who have died and will die. His statement confirms the doctrine of the OT regarding the resurrection of believers in the last days. [Job, David, etc.]

²⁶ And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

- This appears to be a hint regarding the rapture.
- Group 2 = Believers who will be living at the time of His return.
- Jesus revealed there will be a generation of believers who will not have to pass through death to reach eternal life.
- Paul affirmed this in I Thess. 4:17: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Concluding Thoughts: Pre-Trib Rapture

In the great purging of evil civilizations recorded throughout the Bible, God Never Poured Out His Wrath Upon His Faithful And Righteous Followers.

His wrath has fallen solely upon unrepentant sinners.

Luke 17:26-30 And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. ²⁷ They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

- God withheld His wrathful judgment upon the wicked and rebellious population of the world until the righteous Noah and his family entered the ark.
- Significant: The wrath of God unleashed the Flood only after "the Lord shut him in" for protection.

²⁸ Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; ²⁹ But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.

³⁰ Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

God supernaturally destroyed Sodom, but only after Lot and his family escaped from the city.

Gen. 19:22 the angel warned Lot, "Haste thee, escape hither; for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither."

- Significant: Fundamental principle of God dealing with man. Despite the wickedness of Sodom, the angel said he could not destroy the evil city and its perverse population until the righteous Lot and his family escaped.

Side Note: Ezek. 16:49-50 Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom,

- Pride
- Fulness Of Bread = Gluttony
- Abundance Of Idleness_was in her and in her daughters = Laziness
- Neither Did She Strengthen The Hand Of The Poor And Needy.
- And they were Haughty, and Committed Abomination before me:
- Therefore I took them away as I saw good.

Principle: The wrath of God is reserved for those who reject the Lord's offer of salvation.

Rom. 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

Consider: Believers often experience God's loving chastening for our correction.

We endure the consequences of our sins.

God's Word clearly reveals the wrath of God is reserved for unrepentant sinners.

I Thess. 1:10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

1. Christians are to expectantly wait for the imminent return of His Son from heaven
 2. Jesus will come from Heaven for His Church.
 3. Christ's coming for His followers will deliver "us from the wrath to come."
- Clear that the resurrection of the saints will precede the Tribulation when "the wrath to come" will be unleashed from heaven upon the unrepentant sinners who will worship Satan rather than God.

By intentionally not revealing the time of the Rapture and the coming resurrection, the Lord has kept His Church waiting expectantly, in every generation for the last 2000 years, until the final day when we shall be called up in the air to join with the "dead in Christ" to be taken into His presence. We are simply instructed "to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come."

"Like a magnet that draws only iron filings, so the first coming of Jesus Christ will draw only those who know Him into the clouds to meet Him in the air."

Marantha!