

Biblical Forensics ©

“Deliverance before Judgment” Part 24

This is Part 2 of Nathan E. Jones’ **“11 Reasons Why I Believe in a Pre-Tribulation Rapture.”**⁽¹⁾ We pick up with point #2:

2. The Rapture is described as occurring at any time without warning

Jesus stated in Matthew 24:42, 44 to: **“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come... So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.”** Not only do believers in Christ not know when to expect Him, but the Father Himself seems to have left Jesus out of the exact time His Son is to return. As Jesus stated in Matthew 24:36, **“No man knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.”** These and other verses –(Matthew 24:36,42,44,50; 25:13; 1st Thessalonians 4:18; Titus 2:13; 1st John 2:28; 3:2-3) indicate that Jesus’ arrival will come when nobody expects it.

The Second Coming, on the other hand, is preceded by many events, such as the rise of the Antichrist –(Revelation 12:13-17; Zechariah 13:7-9), a treaty with Israel –(Daniel 9:27), the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple –(Matthew 24:15; 2nd Thessalonians 2:3-4; Revelation 11:1-2), as well as plagues and judgments and persecutions destroying most of the world’s population – (Revelation 6 - 18). The book of Revelation reports these events as occurring during the 7-year Tribulation, which Revelation reveals precede the Second Coming.

Because the Rapture could happen at any moment and without warning and the Second Coming is preceded by so many signs, then the Rapture and Second Coming must be different events. The Rapture has to occur before the seven years’ worth of signs, because Christians are called to look for the Lord’s return rather than signs such as the Antichrist’s arrival. Once the signs begin, then the seven year countdown begins towards its end with Christ’s return at the Second Coming.

Jesus’ imminent return dismisses any of the other viewpoints related to a rapture that occur within or at the end of the Tribulation.

3. The Rapture and the removal of the “Restrainer” occur at the same time

In 2nd Thessalonians, the church at Thessalonica was afraid due to a false report that they had entered the Day of the Lord (Tribulation) and had

somehow missed the Rapture. The Apostle Paul assured them that the Antichrist would not be revealed until a restraining force would be taken away so that the Man of Lawlessness could be revealed.

Because the revealing of the Antichrist coincides with the beginning of the 7-year Tribulation starting with his peace treaty with Israel -(Daniel 9:27), then the Restrainer has to be removed before the Tribulation. As the Holy Spirit also works in salvation (John 16:8-11; 1 John. 5:7) during the Tribulation, then it is the Church that must be the Restrainer that is removed. Therefore, the Rapture and the removal of the Church must coincide, and at the beginning of the seven years.

4. The Tribulation is for Israel's Redemption

Jeremiah 30:7 describes the Tribulation as the "time of Jacob's trouble" - ***"How awful that day will be! None will be like it. It will be a time of trouble for Jacob, but he will be saved out of it."***

In the book of Matthew, whose primary audience are the Jews; Jesus explains to his Jewish followers what life will be like during the Tribulation. Also, Revelation 12 describes picturesquely a woman who gives birth and has to flee due to persecution during the Tribulation. The context shows the woman is Israel. And again, the Battle of Armageddon is the world against Israel. Two-thirds of the Jewish people will be killed from these battles. These texts and others show that the Tribulation is meant for the redemption of the Jewish people.

Why are the Jews the object of persecution during the Tribulation? For one, Satan hates the Jewish people for giving the world the Scriptures and the Messiah, as well as he wishes to thwart God's promises to the Jews (see Bedrock #4). Secondly, the Jews have to be so desperately brought low that they finally call out to their Messiah ***"Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord"*** -(Matthew 23:39; Luke 13:35). The Tribulation, then, is used for Israel's redemption which also results in the punishment of the wicked. The Church does not fit this scenario, and are left out of the purposes of the Tribulation. They would need to be removed - caught up - before the Tribulation begins.

5. The Tribulation is not for the Church

The Tribulation is God's wrath upon the unbelieving world, and not for those who are saved from Christ's resurrection to the Rapture - called the Church. Yes, believers have suffered all throughout human history, but there is a special time (just like the Flood) set apart called the Day of the Lord for God's wrath. Christians suffering and the Tribulation/Day of the Lord are different.

True believers in Christ during the Church age, represented by the Church of Philadelphia, are promised in Revelation 3:10, ***"Since you have kept My***

command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth. Paul states in 1st Thessalonians 1:10, ***“and to wait for His Son from heaven, who He raised from the dead - Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.”*** He also states in 1st Thessalonians 5:9, ***“For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*** Romans 5:9 states, ***“Since we have now been justified by His blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through Him!”*** Ephesians 5:6 states, ***“Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God’s wrath comes on those who are disobedient.”*** Colossians 3:4 states, ***“When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.”*** Again and again, Scripture states the Church is not meant to endure God’s wrath.

6. God’s wrath involves the whole 7-year Tribulation

The view that the Rapture will occur at the mid-point of the Tribulation is based upon 1st Corinthians 15:52 which states that the Rapture will occur at the blowing of ***“the last trumpet.”*** This Mid-Tribulation Rapture view then declares the trumpet to be the last of the seven trumpets in Revelation 11 that is blown at the mid-point of the Tribulation. Why, of the 114 references to trumpets in the Bible these two are identified as one and the same only defies sound Bible, study. The context clearly shows the last trumpet of 1st Corinthians 15 is blown to believers, whereas the seven trumpets of Revelation 8, 9, and 11 are sounded for unbelievers. The Revelation trumpets, therefore, can have no relevance for the Church.

The Pre-Wrath Rapture view has the Church raptured just before the bowl judgments -(Revelation 16) that occur during the last quarter of the Tribulation. The bowl judgments are the only judgments this view considers to be the wrath of God, knowing the Seal and Trumpet judgments as wrath from man and Satan. But, isn’t it Jesus Himself who breaks the seals that launch each of the Revelation 6 seal judgments which occur at the beginning of the Tribulation? Also, the seven angels who blow the trumpets that initiate each of the trumpet judgments are given their trumpets at the throne of God -(Revelation 8:2). And, Revelation 15:1 states that the bowl judgments at the end of the Tribulation finish the wrath of God, not begin His wrath.

Because these judgments are initiated by Jesus Himself at the beginning of the Tribulation, the whole Tribulation must be God’s wrath, which the Church is exempt from.

7. The Old Testament and Revelation leave the Church out of the Tribulation

The focus of the Tribulation – to pour out God’s wrath on the Earth just like the Flood –(Isaiah 24:22; Zephaniah 3:8; 1st Thessalonians 5:3; 2nd Thessalonians 2:12) and to bring the Jewish people to accept Jesus as Messiah –(Matthew 23:39; Luke 13:35) – is addressing by the Old Testament and the book of Revelation to the unbelievers and the Jewish people. In any Biblical content concerning the Tribulation/Day of the Lord, the Church cannot be found.

The whole concept of the Church was a mystery to the Old Testament prophets. They focused on the nation of Israel. The book of Matthew is written to the Jewish people, whom Jesus is addressing in Matthew 24. In the book of Revelation, chapters 2 and 3 cover the Church Age, but then there is no mention of the Church until after the Tribulation/Day of the Lord chapters 6-18. In chapter 19, the Church returns to the texts and can be found, not suffering but celebrating with Christ at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb and preparing to return with Jesus to Earth.

The remainder of Nathan E. Jones requires another segment to conclude. The next segment will begin with point #8. Nathan’s 11 Reasons why he believes in the Pre-Tribulation Rapture is a very comprehensive understanding of “Deliverance before Judgment”.

Pastor Bob

Notes:

1. <http://christinprophecy.org/articles/why-i-believe-in-a-pre-tribulation-rapture/>