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The Rapture: Why It's Pre-Wrath But Not Pre-Trib – Pt. 3

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Jesus is coming again!!! After the gospel message, that Christ came to earth close to 2,000 years ago to die for your sins and be raised again so you might become a child of God, the next most important message is that He is coming again to complete your salvation and begin His reign on earth!!! (Rev. 1:5-8). Jesus, who loves you infinitely more than anyone else in the world, who eternally, personally, continually, and powerfully loves you, who always thinks about you, and who prays, cares, and works for you, is coming again! Psalm 86:12-13; 1 John 4:9-10, 16; Revelation 22:7, 12, 20

Jesus wants you to know He is coming again, to be 100% convinced and confident that He is coming again, and that He is coming to take you, His bride, home to heaven so you can always be with Him. *“I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also”* (Jn. 14:3). *“We will live together with Him”* (1

Th. 5:10). And Jesus wants you to long to be with Him, to be excited about seeing Him, and to be ready and waiting for Him, this One who loves you so much. 1 Thess. 1:10

Jesus wants you to know when He is coming, that is, the general time of His return. But many Christians are naïve, misinformed, or don't care about the timing of Christ's coming. This should not be! Jesus Himself told you, *"Behold, I have told you everything in advance"* (Mk. 13:23), and *"When you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door… this generation will not pass away until all these things take place"* (Matt. 24:33-34). Paul said to you, *"But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light."* 1 Thess. 5:4-5

Many Christians mistakenly think the rapture is pre-trib, just before Dan. 70th week, but that is not true. **The rapture is pre-wrath**, after the midpoint of Dan. 70th week, after the Antichrist is revealed, after great tribulation, after the end of this age and before the wrath of God, sometime during the 2nd half of Dan. 70th week. Matt. 24:3-30, more than any other passage, lists out the key events that must take place before Christ's return.

The next best text is Rev. 6-9, which we will examine today. Though not as detailed as Matt. 24, it gives the same main events: birth pains (Rev. 6:1-8 – Matt. 24:4-8), great tribulation (Rev. 6:9-11 – Matt. 24:9, 21-22), the end of the age (Rev. 6:12-17 – Matt. 24:29), the rapture of the church (Rev. 7:9-17 – Matt. 24:30-31, 40-41), and also, the wrath of God (Rev. 8-9 – Matt. 24:28). This agrees perfectly with what we have learned so far about the Biblical order of events. But let's go into more detail.

Revelation 6:1-8, the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th seals, is similar to the **birth pains** of Matt. 24:4-8. There is deception, wars, and hyperinflation – suggesting there is famine. Death affects, not the entire

world, but 1/4th of it, which goes along with what Jesus stated about birth pains happening in various places. These *"seal"* events are not part of the end-of-the-age, day-of-the-Lord wrath, but precursors to it.

Revelation 6:9-11, the 5th seal, focuses on believers who experience **great tribulation** and are martyred for Christ. They cry out for justice – *"Will not God bring justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them? I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly"* (Lk. 18:7-8). Christians are preaching the gospel until the end of the age (Matt. 24:14), but are also praying for Christ to judge sinners, to pour out His wrath on this world, and to set up His kingdom. *"Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."* Matt. 6:9-10

Revelation 6:12-17, the 6th seal, speaks of signs that occur just before **the end of the age** and the day of the Lord (Matt. 24:9, Acts 2:19-20). A great earthquake shakes the earth and, at the same time, the heavenly lights go out and the world goes dark. *"There will be signs in sun and moon and stars… men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world"* (Luke 21:25-26). Unbelievers are scared to death for they know God's wrath is coming soon. They say to the rocks and mountains, *"Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb."* But the wrath does not begin until Rev. 8. And before that –

Revelation 7:9-10, between the 6th and 7th seals, talks of God's children in heaven after the **rapture**, after they are delivered from His wrath. *"Behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes… and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.'"* Vs. 14 confirms what we already know, that these believers have *"come out of the great tribulation,"* out of great persecution (Matt. 24:9, 21-22; Rev. 6:9-11). And they are instantly taken to Jesus and to heaven, where He, *"the Lamb in the center of the*

throne will be their shepherd… and God will wipe every tear from their eyes." Vs. 17

Revelation 8-9, the 7th seal and the **opened scroll,** which lists the trumpet judgments, **God's just and devastating wrath**. There will be *"hail and fire, mixed with blood… and a third of the earth was burned up"* (Rev. 8:7). *"A third of the sea became blood… and a third of the creatures which were in the sea… died"* (Rev. 8:9). *"Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth"* (Rev. 8:13). *"… torment for five days… in those days men will seek death and not find it"* (Rev. 9:6). *"The four angels… were released, so that they could kill a third of mankind"* (Rev. 9:15). These trumpet judgments are part 1 of God's wrath, and the bowl judgments, soon to be poured out on earth, are part 2. Rev. 15-16

To sum up, there are the first four seals – the birth pains, the 5th seal – great tribulation, the 6th seal – the end of the age, the rapture of the church between the 6th and 7th seals, the 7th seal – the opening of the scroll and God's wrath. Or you could simply say: there's great tribulation in Rev. 6, the rapture in Rev. 7, and God's wrath in Rev. 8-9. The chronology of end-time events is clearly and unmistakably laid out – and what we learn is that the rapture is not pre-trib but pre-wrath, that Christians experience great tribulation but not God's wrath.

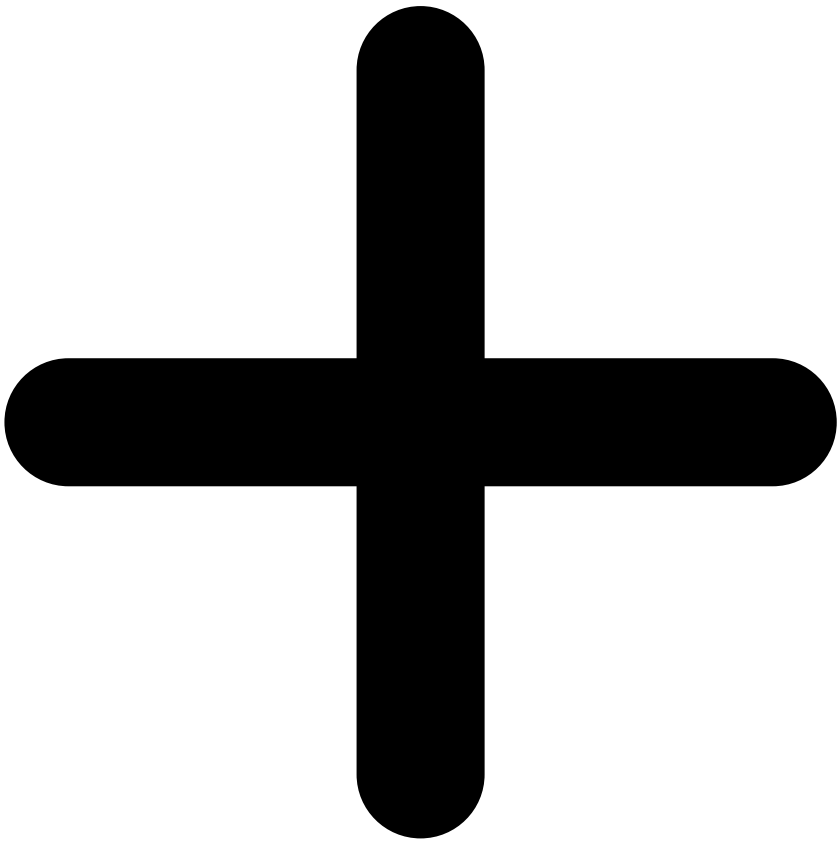
Jesus, referring to saints, says, *"In the world, you have tribulation"* (Jn. 16:33). This supports what He says in Matt 24:9 – *"They will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you…"* This tribulation is cut short and immediately, Jesus, rapturing us from the earth, "*rescues us from the wrath to come"* (1 Th. 1:10), the wrath that is poured out upon sinners. And what do they say? *"'Hide us from the wrath of the Lamb'; for the great day of their wrath has come."* (Rev. 6:17). Satan's wrath is seen when he persecutes saints (Rev. 12:12), and God's wrath is seen when He punishes sinners. Rev. 8-9, 16

It's obvious, it's plainly stated that saints go through great tribulation

and that sinners experience God's wrath. But why are many believers pre-trib? Why are they deceived? Why do they think they will be raptured at the beginning of Dan. 70th week? The world, the flesh, and the devil can even influence Christians. 1) The world tells people to eat, drink, and be merry (Lk. 12:19), opposing the truth that we are to suffer for God (1 Pet. 4). 2) The flesh loves food, fun, and comfort (this country promotes the pursuit of happiness), leading people to be spiritually soft (Lk. 6:20-26). 3) The devil deceives and misleads Christians with regards to the timing of the rapture (1 Tim. 4:1). The answer to the devil's lies is God's truth, and being holy, hopeful, sober, and alert.

For three weeks, we have been explaining and proving that the rapture is not pre-trib but pre-wrath, that Christians experience great tribulation but are saved from God's wrath. After the start of Dan. 70th week, after birth pains, after the midpoint of Dan. 70th week, after the Antichrist is revealed, after great tribulation, after the end of the age, sometime during the 2nd half of Dan. 70th week, Christ comes in the clouds and raptures the church. This glorious event, the rapture, is before the day of the Lord, that horrific and righteous wrath that is poured out upon this evil earth.

In conclusion: *"But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day… let us be alert… let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. Therefore, encourage one another and build up one another, just as you are also doing… May the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely. And may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass."* 1 Thessalonians 5:4-11, 23



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