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The Rapture: Why It’s Pre-Wrath But Not Pre-Trib – Pt. 1

By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #369 ~

There’s a lot of confusion about the timing of the rapture, whether it’s at the beginning (pre-trib), the midpoint (mid-trib), or the end (post-trib) of Dan. 70th week – or whether it’s sometime during the last half (pre-wrath) of this prophecy-packed 7-year period. Some even joke about it saying that it’s pan-trib, that it will all pan out in the end. But it’s no laughing matter. We must know the truth – and we must be sober and alert. 1 Thess. 5:4-10|

Can you imagine what it will be like for Christians who are mistaken about the timing of Christ’s return, especially those who believe in the pre-trib position, who assume He is returning at the start of Dan. 70th week? They think they should be in heaven but are still on earth, and then: they are hearing about or experiencing birth pains – wars, famines, etc.; the world is increasingly lawless; that devilish man, the

Antichrist, is revealed, and he is persecuting Jews and Christians; they are forced to worship the image of the beast, the Antichrist, or else be killed; they must take the mark of the beast to openly buy and sell; family and fellow church members turn them in to the authorities. Unsuspecting believers will be shocked, terribly upset, and in great fear, wondering what's happening. Without question, it will be the most Satanic, traumatic, hellacious time in history. *"Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time."* Rev. 12:12

I promise you, extremely difficult days are coming! But those who ascribe to the pre-trib theory do not understand this – they think they will be out of here before these things happen. In these last years before Christ's return, we need discernment and clarity with regard to the truths of His coming. God does not want any of His children to be surprised, to be caught off guard, but to have convictions, to clearly know what He says about the timing of His Son's return to rapture the church. 2 Thess. 2:1-5

The primary view among Christians as to the timing of the rapture is that it's pre-trib, that it's at the beginning of Dan. 70th week, before this so-called 7-year tribulation period. But I am 100% convinced that it's pre-wrath, that we go through a time of great-tribulation, but are then delivered from the wrath of God that's poured out on earth. So why is the pre-trib theory incorrect? Why is it error? Why is the rapture pre-wrath and not pre-trib, or for that matter, any other position? In His Word, God tells us why? In these next three posts, I will be looking at several reasons, showing and proving that the rapture occurs after we go through great tribulation but before God pours out His wrath. Let's begin.

1. **There is only one coming of Christ.** The first error of those believing in a pre-trib rapture is that there are two comings, or a 2-phase coming, a secret coming of Christ at the beginning of Dan. 70thweek to rapture the Christians, and one at the end when He

redeems a remnant of Jews and is said to rescue a large group of newly saved Christians. But the Bible says there is only coming, not two (Matt. 24:3, 27; 1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Th. 4:15, 5:23; 2 Th. 2:1, Jms. 5:7, etc.). This word coming is singular, and is defined as arrival and consequent presence. Christ comes back and is in charge, is orchestrating all that happens on earth, from the rapture to the wrath to the salvation of the Jews to the defeat of the Antichrist to the chaining of Satan to the setting up of His 1000-year kingdom.

The *rapture* occurs at the coming of Christ, and it's the first event to occur at His coming. Believers on earth will see Christ appearing in the clouds and immediately be raptured and gathered to Him (Matt. 24:30-31). Paul tells us, *"We who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen sleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout... we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air"* (1 Th. 4:15-17). Equating vs. 15 with vs. 17 makes it unmistakably, unquestionably clear that Christians are raptured, are caught up at the coming of the Lord, and not at any other time.

Alan Kurshener explains it this way: *"Paul teaches that those who survive ('who are left until the coming of the Lord') live right up to the Parousia. This shows that there is no gap of time between the rapture and His coming; the rapture is the initial event of the Parousia of Christ"* (Antichrist Before the Day of the Lord, p. 76). 2 Thess. 2:1 also tells us that we are gathered to Christ at His coming. So the rapture is not separate from Christ's coming, but is the first event to occur at His coming.

The rapture takes place sometime during the last half of Dan. 70th week. You see, the Antichrist is revealed at the midpoint of this week (Dan. 9:27), and 2 Th. 2:8-9 states that

Christ's coming is after the Antichrist's coming. Since the rapture occurs at Christ's coming, we can conclude that it occurs after the midpoint, sometime during the 2nd half of this week. This Scriptural order of events is also seen in Matt. 24:15-31. The abomination of desolation, caused by the Antichrist, happens at the midpoint of Dan. 70th week (vs. 15). After the midpoint, there's great tribulation but it's cut short (vss. 21-22, 29), and then there's Christ's coming, and the rapture and gathering of believers to Himself (vss. 30-31). So there's Christ's coming, and the rapture occurs at His coming, and His coming takes place at an unknown time during the last half, the last 3½ years of this week.

2. **A series of *observable events* must occur before Christ's coming and the rapture.** The second error of those who believe in a pre-trib rapture is that it is imminent, is that it can happen at any moment, that no signs or prophesied events need to occur before the rapture of the church. This is incorrect for Christ tells us that many things must happen before the rapture, and that there is a particular generation of Christians who see all these things take place.

   These verses generally state that the rapture is not imminent: Heb. 10:25 – *"… encouraging one another and all the more as you see the day drawing near."* A generation of Christians know these events must occur before Christ's coming and then see them happen. And they are encouraged for it means their Savior's return is soon, and they are to encourage others with this good news.

   "While they are saying, 'Peace and safety!', then destruction will come upon them suddenly… But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief, for you are all sons of light… so then let us not sleep as others do, but

let us be alert and sober" (1 Th. 5:4-6). The story is about a person who is asleep and caught off guard when the thief comes. The lesson is that non-Christians will be surprised when Christ returns. But as Christians, we are not to be surprised, we are to be awake. We have been told that Christ is coming, and we know the signs showing us that His coming is drawing near. And as believers we are to be watchmen, we are to be sober and alert, and observe all these prophesied events occurring in the world around us.

These verses specifically state that the rapture is not imminent: *"When you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door. Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place"* (Matt. 24:33-34). This is referring to that last generation of Christians who see all these prophesied events take place, and know that Christ *"is near, right at the door"*, that their *"redemption* (physical) *is drawing near"* (Lk. 21:28). Jesus, in Matt. 24:4-30, lists *"all these things"*, 22 different things that must happen before He comes back. And Jesus is detailed and chronological. We read about false teaching, increasing wars and earthquakes, apostasy, betrayal, abomination of desolation, preaching, great persecution, martyrdom, heavenly signs, etc. Rev. 6:1-8

What strikes me is the exclamatory, emphatic verse that follows vss. 33-34 – *"Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away"* (Matt. 24:35). Yes, heaven and earth will pass away, impossible as that may seem. <u>But the words</u> that tell us that Christ is coming back, and that all these things will happen before His coming, and that there is a generation of believers who see all these things (vss. 4-30), <u>will never pass away.</u> Jesus wants you to be assured, to be absolutely convinced that He is telling the truth about His 2nd coming – and He wants this sequence of events to be firmly set in your mind, and know

that they will occur during Dan. 70th week. Luke 21:28-33

Pre-trib believers want us to think we won't see any of these things happen before the rapture, but just the opposite is true, for all these things must occur before this glorious event, and a generation of believers will see them come to pass. And God wants all Christians, especially that last generation to know these events, and to be 100% convinced they will happen, and to be excited about Christ's coming, and to be expecting Him and looking forward to seeing Him. 1 Thess. 1:9-10, 4:18

Pre-trib thinkers wrongly believe they will be raptured at the beginning of Dan. 70th week, and that Matt. 24:32-34 (this last generation of believers who *"see all these things"*) is referring to a large, distinct group of Christians who will be saved during that 70th week, but that is just not true. God never says that. And it's their way of putting the pieces of the prophetic puzzle together, but they are wrong. They are trying to force square pegs into round holes, but they don't fit.

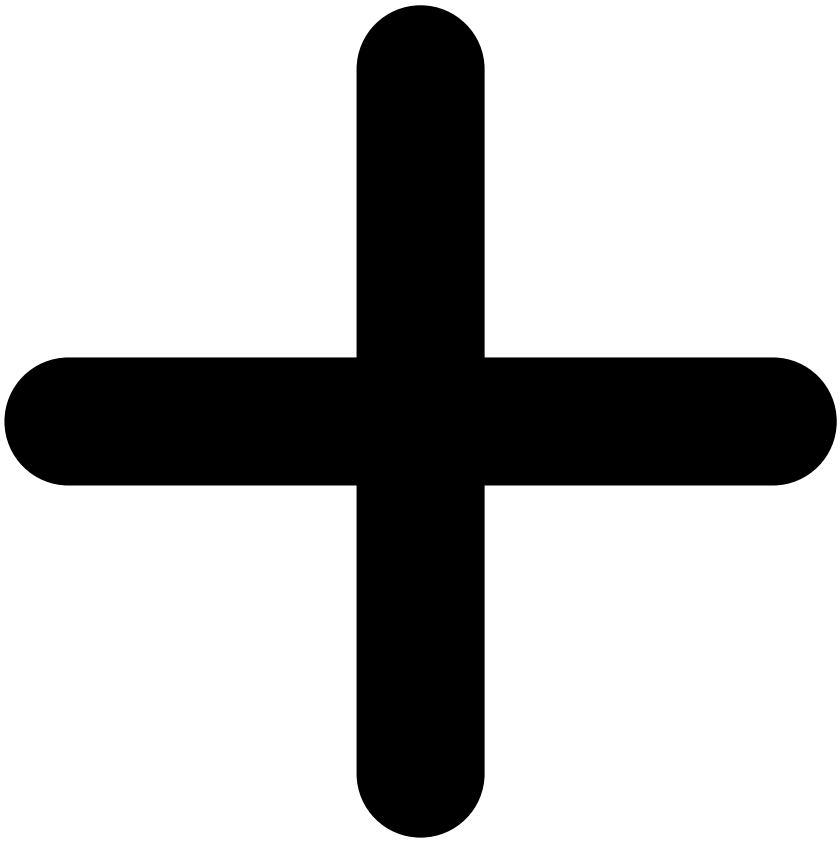
I have talked about how the rapture is not pre-trib, not before this so-called 7-year tribulation period, but that it's pre-wrath, that it happens sometime during the last half of Dan. 70th week. I have also talked about how Christ's coming is not imminent, that it can't happen at any moment, and that there's one last generation of Christians who will see all these prophesied events occur, and who will know with certainty that Christ's coming is right at the door, will happen very, very soon.

In the next two posts, I will continue sharing with you why the pre-trib position is wrong, is error.
* I will explain that the 70th week is not a 7-year period of tribulation.
* I will talk about how the rapture does not take place before Matt. 24:4.
* I will look at how Matt. 24 is specifically speaking to a last generation of Christians, the final *"you"*.
* I will explain to you that the church is talked about after Rev. 3.

* I I will show you that Rev. 6-7 and Matt. 24 go hand in hand, and need to be looked at together.
* I will talk about how pre-trib believers focus on certain *“rapture”* verses, but they must connect these verses with many others on Christ’s coming that relate to the rapture.

“I, Jesus, have sent the angel to testify to you these things for the churches. **Revelation 22:16**

P.S. A relevant post on this subject that I encourage you to read is: *“The Pre-Trib Rapture Teaching is False.”* This is one about your heavenly Father: *“The Father’s Love for His Children”*





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