

# Articles on the Post-Trib Rapture

As in the Days of Lot

Luke 17:20-37 Jesus First Speaks of His Second Coming Tim Warner - Revised 11/2002

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**THE NATURE OF THE COMING KINGDOM** Luke 17 is the first time Jesus spoke to His disciples about the second coming in any detail. If you look closely, you will see that the primary subject of this discourse was the coming and establishment of Christ's Kingdom. ([Click here](#) to read the entire discourse).

*Luke 17:20-21 And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, **when the kingdom of God should come**, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: 21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you. (KJV)*

The rest of this discourse is centered around the question of when and how the Kingdom will arrive. Jesus was responding to the Pharisees who demanded that He tell them when His Kingdom was going to come. Jesus told these same people that they would not inherit the Kingdom of God (Matt. 5:20, Matt. 21:43). Yet, here Jesus replied, "*the Kingdom of God is within you.*" The words "within you" are often misunderstood. A-millennialists point to this passage as proof that Christ's Kingdom is "spiritual" in the hearts of believers now rather than a physical coming Kingdom on earth. But, they misunderstand this passage because of a questionable translation of the Greek word "entos." While the KJV says "within you," this doesn't seem to make sense because the Pharisees were certainly not saved. In fact, they were trying to trap Jesus with His words. So, how could God's spiritual kingdom be within them? The 1611 KJV translators were not sure how best to translate this word, so they included a marginal note with the alternate reading, "among you." This is obviously the true meaning of the word in this context. It is translated "among you" or "in your midst" in various other translations. We can also see a parallel statement by Jesus in the following verse.

*Matt 12:28 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then **the kingdom of God is come unto you.** (KJV)*

Here Jesus was referring to Himself as being the embodiment of the Kingdom at that time.

In Luke 17, Jesus was standing in a crowd of Pharisees who were antagonistic toward Him and the idea that He was the Messiah who would fulfill the Old Testament prophecies of the coming King, to sit upon the Throne of David, and reign over the nation of Israel. They demanded that He tell them when His Kingdom would come. In other words they were saying, "If you're the Messiah, where is your Kingdom?" Perhaps they were really implying, "you're not seriously going to overthrow the Romans and establish your Kingdom with this little band of disciples, are you?" Jesus responded by saying, "the Kingdom of God cometh not with observation." In other words, you are not going to see it come. Jesus knew that His physical literal Kingdom would not come until His second coming. And He knew these antagonistic Pharisees were lost and would not be resurrected to inherit His Kingdom when it did come. While Jesus the Messiah was present in their midst, He was the embodiment of the Kingdom. That is why He said, "*the Kingdom of God is in your midst.*" He was saying, "hey, you're looking at the Kingdom of God!" Jesus Himself was all the "Kingdom" they were going to see.

Jesus did NOT mean the Kingdom of God will never "*come with observation.*" He meant His Kingdom would not come in this manner YET, at His first coming. This is apparent from other statements by Jesus. For example:

*John 18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but **NOW is my kingdom not from hence.** (KJV)*

The key word here is "NOW." Jesus was saying that at His first coming His Kingdom would not appear as a physical Kingdom. The implication is that it will come later. Jesus did not deny the coming of His literal Kingdom. Rather, He taught that its arrival was delayed until His second coming. This fact is clear two chapters later when Jesus was speaking among a much more sympathetic crowd.

*Luke 19:11 And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because **they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.** (KJV)*

In the parable of the Talents that follows, Jesus indicated that He must go away leaving His servants in charge. But, He would return at some point "having received the Kingdom," and would then judge His servants. The rewards given to the faithful in His absence would be authority as rulers in His coming Kingdom.

The antagonistic exchange between the Pharisees and Jesus in Luke 17 occurred in the presence of the disciples who were also expecting the Messianic Kingdom to appear. Some of them were even concerned about where they would sit in relation to Jesus' throne in His coming Kingdom, [[Matt. 20:21-23](#)]. No doubt, Jesus' answer to the Pharisees caused them great concern. Jesus understood their concern and turned to reassure them.

*22 And he said **unto the disciples**, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it. 23 And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them. 24 For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be **in his day.** 25 **But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation.** (KJV)*

Jesus' strategy is quite obvious here. He told the Pharisees, who demanded that He produce His Kingdom as proof that He was the Messiah, that they would not see His Kingdom and that He Himself was the embodiment of the Kingdom standing in their midst. He Himself was all of the Kingdom they would see. Then, knowing the concern of His disciples, He turned to them to reassure them that His Kingdom would indeed come, and it would come in a blaze of glory at His **second** coming. But first, He had to accomplish the work of atonement.

**DETAILS OF THE SECOND COMING** Following this, Jesus began for the first time to share with His disciples more of the details of His second coming.

*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 Noe entered into the ark**, and the flood came, and **destroyed them all.** 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.** (KJV)*

Jesus emphasized the fact that the righteous will be delivered **the same day** the wicked are utterly destroyed. The sudden and total destruction mentioned by Jesus can only refer to the battle of Armageddon, when Jesus will destroy the Antichrist and his armies, [Rev. 19:11-21]. It cannot refer to a prolonged judgment such as the plagues of Revelation. Since the deliverance of the righteous will occur "the same day" the wicked are utterly destroyed, it is logical to place this supernatural deliverance immediately before the battle of Armageddon. This is precisely what Paul wrote in 1 Thess. 5:1-2, that Jesus' coming "as a thief in the night" will bring "sudden destruction" on the ungodly yet relief for Christians who are watching for His coming.

Jesus used both Noah and Lot as illustrations of the rescue of the righteous while the wicked are left to be destroyed. Notice from both illustrations, **it was the righteous who were relocated to safety, while the wicked were left in place to be destroyed.** In Noah's case, the righteous were **lifted up above the waters** in the ark while the wicked were left behind to drown. In Lot's case, the righteous were **escorted away by the angels** while the wicked remained behind to be pelted with flaming brimstone. These examples clearly illustrate how this passage should be understood. The righteous will be supernaturally rescued just before total destruction falls on the ungodly. Next, Jesus went into detail about how the righteous would be removed from the scene just before judgment falls.

*Luke 17:31-37 In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. 32 Remember Lot's wife. 33 Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it. 34 I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be **taken**, and the other shall be **left**. 35 Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be **taken**, and the other **left**. 36 Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be **taken**, and the other **left**. 37 And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.* (KJV)

This is the very first time the Scriptures record Jesus' description of the rapture for His disciples. Notice the righteous will be supernaturally "taken" from their beds, the fields, and at work, while the wicked will be left behind.

**THE PLACE OF SAFETY** The disciples' curiosity prompted them to ask, "Where Lord?" [vs. 37]. They wanted to know where the righteous will be taken at the rapture. Noah had an ark, and was lifted up above the waters of destruction, where he viewed the devastation of the world by the flood. Lot was escorted by the angels to a place of safety, yet in full view of the burning of Sodom. The disciples wanted to know what they could expect when this scenario begins to unfold. Jesus' response was to paint a word picture that they were all quite familiar with. Many times the disciples had observed the birds of prey circling in the sky, hovering above while animals were being attacked by other animals. The birds would hover above the scene until all signs of life were gone. Then they would take the spoils. If we tie this word picture into Jesus' previous statement about the destruction of the wicked, the picture Jesus painted becomes quite obvious. At the battle of Armageddon, prophesied so clearly in several Old Testament [Zech. 14 & Joel 3], the Lord will destroy the wicked and the saints will take the spoils [Dan. 7:18]. The carnage of the wicked will cover the landscape below, while the birds of prey hover in the sky above out of harm's way until the battle is over.

We see from these passages that the righteous, gathered from all around the world, will be brought to a single location. Where? In the clouds above the battle scene, where Jesus is going to wipe out the armies of the nations so He can establish Himself as King of all the earth. When the righteous are gathered they will hover above in the clouds like eagles while the carnage covers the landscape below all around Jerusalem. When the battle is over, the righteous will take the spoils. "But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever." [Dan. 7:18]. On the Day of the Lord, after Jerusalem is attacked and rescued by the return of the Lord, "your plunder will be divided among you." [Zech. 14:1]

**IMPLICATIONS FOR THE RAPTURE** Luke 17 provides us with two very important facts, both of which require a post-trib rapture.

1. The righteous will be delivered **the same day** the wicked are destroyed.
2. Those who are "taken" (caught up in the air) will immediately proceed to the **location** in the clouds above the battle scene.

Revelation also places Christ's coming for believers at the time of Armageddon.

*Revelation 16:15 Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. 16 And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.* (KJV)

Verse 16 above provides the context - the Battle of Armageddon. Yet, this is the coming for which Christians are instructed to watch.

**PRE-TRIB DENIALS THAT LUKE 17 IS THE RAPTURE** Many pre-tribbers deny that Luke 17 describes the rapture, for obvious reasons. They claim those "taken" are the wicked, not the righteous. However, the context and the Greek words for "taken" and "left" argue against that view.

In the context, both examples of Noah and Lot show that the righteous were first supernaturally relocated to a place of safety and then the remaining wicked were destroyed. Jesus said it will be the same at His coming. At the rapture, the righteous will be caught up, then the wicked will be destroyed "the same day."

The Greek words for "taken" and "left" further strengthen this interpretation. According to Strong's Greek dictionary, the word "taken" #3880 means: "to receive near, i.e. associate with oneself (in any familiar or intimate act or relation)." Likewise, the word "left" #863 means: "to send forth, ...forsake, lay aside, leave, let alone, ...send away..." Obviously, the Lord Jesus will not receive the wicked unto Himself, and lay aside or forsake the righteous! Therefore, it is obvious that those **taken** are the righteous, and the wicked are **left** to be destroyed "the same day." The righteous are received by Christ to spare them the destruction that falls immediately on the ungodly who are left.

#### NOTES:

*Luke 17:20-37 Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; 21 "nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you." 22 Then He said to the disciples, "The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. 23 "And they will say to you, 'Look here!' or 'Look there!' Do not go after them or follow them. 24 "For as the lightning that flashes out of one part under heaven shines to the other part under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day. 25 "But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. 26 "And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: 27 "They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and*

Abomination of Desolation  
vs. 15 [cf. Dan 9:27]

Son of Man comes in  
the clouds to gather  
His Elect. vs. 29-31  
[cf. Dan. 7:13,14]

"Beginning of Sorrows"  
[Birth Pains] vs. 8

"Great Tribulation"  
[Intense Labor] vs. 21

Kingdom

**Tribulation: The Earth gives birth to the Kingdom of God. [Isa. 66:7-24]**

destroyed them all. 28 "Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; 29 "but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. 30 "Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. 31 "In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his goods are in the house, let him not come

down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back. 32 "Remember Lot's wife. 33 "Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. 34 "I tell you, in that night there will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. 35 "Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left. 36 "Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left." 37 And they answered and said to Him, "Where, Lord?" So He said to them, "Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together." (NKJ)

Matt 20:21-23 And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She said to Him, "Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom." 22 But Jesus answered and said, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They said to Him, "We are able." 23 So He said to them, "You will indeed drink My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared by My Father." (NKJ)

### The Olivet Discourse

Matthew Twenty-Four & Mark Thirteen Tim Warner - Revised 11/2002

Read entire chapter, [Matthew 24](#), [Mark 13](#)

**The Importance of the Olivet Discourse** The Olivet Discourse, contained in Matthew 24 and Mark 13, is the most straightforward teaching regarding the end of the age found anywhere in Scripture, and is the cornerstone of all New Testament eschatology. New Testament writers referred to, and based their eschatology on, Jesus' own teaching to His disciples about the end of the age. In successive articles, we will demonstrate the strong dependence on Jesus' Olivet Discourse from Peter's and Paul's teaching on the rapture, as well as from Revelation. Reliance on the Olivet Discourse by the Apostles is extremely important to the post-trib view, because it demolishes the pre-trib claim that this discourse does not concern the "Church." If the Apostles referred their Christian readers to the Olivet Discourse to answer their questions about the rapture, the connection between Jesus' eschatological teaching and Church doctrine is assured.

**The Setting and Sequence of Events** None of the four Gospels give us a complete picture of Jesus' life, actions, or teachings. Details in one Gospel are not always found in the others. This holds true for the Olivet Discourse as well. Only by examining each account and synchronizing them together, can we reconstruct the fullest possible account of what Jesus taught.

One common mistake has been to assume that Luke 21 is another account of the Olivet Discourse. But, a careful examination of Luke 21 reveals that this discourse was delivered on the Temple Mount earlier in the day before Jesus and His disciples went out to the Mount of Olives in the evening. Luke 21 is sometimes referred to as **The Great Temple Discourse**. In that discourse Jesus outlined the following future sequence covering the entire age.

1. the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple
2. the scattering of the Jews among the nations "until the times of the Gentiles" are fulfilled
3. an upheaval among the nations
4. certain cosmic signs
5. Jesus' return to set up His Kingdom

It is significant to notice that in Luke's account, Jesus gave specific instructions to His disciples concerning their escape from the Roman siege of Jerusalem that came in AD70, some 40 years into this dispensation. The early Church historian, Eusebius, recorded that the early Christians heeded Jesus' warnings and fled the city when they saw the Roman armies surrounding Jerusalem, and were spared. It is obvious then that Jesus' instructions to His disciples in this discourse concern the Church. Yet, in the same discourse Jesus spoke of the turmoil of the end of the age, and the cosmic signs that would announce His coming to set up His Kingdom. He told the very same people whom He instructed to "flee to the mountains" when the Roman siege arrived, that they would know that His post-trib coming was near by watching the signs. He also told them to pray that they might be counted worthy to escape all these things. By observing HOW the early Christians escaped the siege and destruction of Jerusalem, we have a good idea of how we can expect to escape the events of the last days - not by rapture but by fleeing when appropriate.

**No Confusion of the Destruction of the Temple and the End of the Age** While the disciples no doubt were interested in the destruction of the Temple foretold by Jesus (and Daniel in Dan. 9:26), their real concern was His second coming and establishing His Kingdom. The disciples could not have missed the fact that these two events were clearly distinguished by Jesus, and separated by a significant period of time. Not only did He distinguish the destruction of the Temple and the second coming in Luke 21's Great Temple Discourse earlier that day, but Matthew also recorded something Jesus said on the Temple Mount that Luke did not mention. Prior to their leaving for the Mount of Olives Jesus said this:

Matt 23:37-39 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! 38 Behold, **your house is left unto you desolate.** 39 For I say unto you, **Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord** (KJV)

Here again, Jesus has clearly separated the destruction of the Temple from His second coming to set up His Kingdom. Most commentators claim that the disciples' question "when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and the end of the age" presupposes that both occur at the same time. But that is not the case. Jesus clearly put Israel's rejection of Him, the desolation of the Temple, and the dispersion of Israel among the nations, before His second coming.

**On the Mount of Olives** On the Mount of Olives later that evening, four of the disciples privately asked Jesus specifically about the signs of His coming and the end of the age. Their interest was more than academic. They expected to live to see His coming. And, they wanted to know how they would recognize when this event was approaching. In this discourse, Jesus answered their question in the most straightforward way, outlining a sequence of events up until the end of the age, and His coming in glory. He gave a series of SIGNS to watch for, including; wars, famines, earthquakes, the Gospel being preached among all nations, the abomination of desolation, and finally, the cosmic signs which will announce His coming after the tribulation. This graphic sequence ended with the following words;

*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: 30 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. 31 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. (KJV)*

Here we see that at Jesus' coming after the tribulation, He will sound a trumpet, and dispatch His angels to gather together "His elect." In Mark's account of this statement, it is clear that Jesus' elect will be gathered from both earth and heaven [Mark 13:27]. Now, notice verse 33;

*Matt 24:33 33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. (KJV)*

Jesus' words clearly indicate that only after all of these signs He gave were fulfilled, could they expect Him to come.

There is a tremendous debate between pre-tribbers and post-tribbers about whether this "gathering" is for the Church. However, let me just suggest that you read this chapter, and take special note of all the places Jesus used the personal pronouns "you," "ye," "yourselves," etc. In doing so, it will become obvious, that Jesus' answer to His disciples, assumed that they could survive to see His coming. How can this be? Simply because Jesus Himself did not know when He would return [Mark 13:32]. And, we know from several other passages, that the early Christians, including Paul, expected to survive until the second coming [John 21:20-23, 1 Thess. 4:15]. In fact, the entire New Testament is written with the assumption that the second coming of Jesus could come in the first century. This fact is important in recognizing the continuity of the Olivet Discourse, and how it flows throughout the present age until the second coming.

Of course, pre-tribbers doubt that this passage refers to the followers of Jesus [the Church]. They think the disciples, in this chapter, represent another group, perhaps certain elect Jews in the tribulation. To settle this issue, I think the Great Commission is of utmost importance. Jesus told His disciples;

*Matt 28:19-20 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (KJV)*

We must bear in mind, that these are the same disciples who, just a few weeks earlier, asked Jesus about His second coming, and sat at His feet while He instructed them to watch for all the signs, and His gathering His elect "immediately after the tribulation." In the above passage, Jesus further commanded them to take His teaching into all the world and make converts. Of special note are the words; "teaching them to observe ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER I HAVE COMMANDED YOU." Jesus commanded these men to teach you and me everything He taught them. If we are to take Jesus seriously here, this must include His teaching in the Olivet Discourse, about watching for the signs of His coming after the tribulation. So, we see two important things from these passages;

1. Jesus never mentioned a pre-trib rapture before His coming in glory after the tribulation. He spoke of His disciples going through the tribulation, and watching for the signs of His coming after the tribulation. This is when He will "gather together His elect."

2. The Gospel He commanded the Apostles to preach, did not include a pre-trib rapture, but instead included teaching concerning watching for His post-trib coming. [which included a post-trib rapture].

Compare the Olivet Discourse to the Great Commission in the following passages.

The Olivet Discourse	The Great Commission
<p><i>Matt 24:14 "And this gospel of the kingdom will be <u>preached in all the world</u> as a witness to <u>all the nations</u>, and then the end will come. (NKJV)</i></p>	<p><i>Matt 28:19 "Go therefore and make disciples of <u>all the nations</u>, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (NKJV)</i></p>
<p><i>Matt 24:3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of <u>the end of the age?</u>" (NKJV)</i></p>	<p><i>Matt 28:20 "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to <u>the end of the age.</u>" Amen (NKJV)</i></p>

Jesus defined the term "end of the age" in the Olivet Discourse, by identifying it with the end of the tribulation. Jesus placed the "great tribulation" just before the "end of the age" [Matt. 24:3,21,29]. It is apparent then, that the "end of the age" in the Great Commission, is also at the end of the tribulation. We are commanded to preach the gospel to all nations until the "end of the age." Therefore, we must continue with the Great Commission until the end of the tribulation. This is the logical conclusion of these passages. In Mark's account of the Olivet Discourse, Jesus ended with a clear warning, and instruction for Christians to watch for His post-trib coming.

*Mark 13:24-27 But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, 25 And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. 26 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. 27 And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.... 33 Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. 34 For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. 35 Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: 36 Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. 37 And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch. (KJV)*

In my judgment, this passage shows that Jesus was speaking to the Church in the Olivet Discourse. Notice, His "leaving His house," refers to Jesus' ascension to heaven. He elsewhere told the disciples He was "going away," but would return for them. Next, He "gave authority to His servants," and, "to every man his work." This is unquestionably referring to the Great Commission, which was given to the Church. Then, He commanded them to "watch" for His coming. Again, there is absolutely no question that Jesus was referring to the period of time between His ascension and second coming, [or the "Church age" to borrow a pre-trib term]. He was referring to Christians when He said to "watch." The question then is, watch for what? The context answers this question in verses 24-27. We, as Christians, are to be watching for Jesus' coming "after the tribulation."

For an in-depth discussion of the Olivet Discourse, see our [verse by verse commentary](#) on Matthew 24.

#### NOTES:

Matt 24:1-51 1 Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. 2 And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down." 3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" 4 And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. 5 "For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. 6 "And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. 7 "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. 8 "All these are the beginning of sorrows. 9 "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. 10 "And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.

11 "Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. 12 "And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. 13 "But he who endures to the end shall be saved. 14 "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come. 15 "Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), 16 "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 17 "Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. 18 "And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. 19 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 20 "And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. 21 "For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 "And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened. 23 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it. 24 "For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. 25 "See, I have told you beforehand.

26 "Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it. 27 "For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 28 "For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together. 29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 "And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. 32 "Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. 33 "So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near-- at the doors! 34 "Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. 35 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. 36 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. 37 "But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

38 "For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 "and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 40 "Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. 41 "Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. 42 "Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. 43 "But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. 44 "Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. 45 "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? 46 "Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. 47 "Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. 48 "But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' 49 "and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, 50 "the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, 51 "and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (NKJ)

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Mark 13:1-37 1 Then as He went out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, "Teacher, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!" 2 And Jesus answered and said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone shall be left upon another, that shall not be thrown down." 3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked Him privately, 4 "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign when all these things will be fulfilled?" 5 And Jesus, answering them, began to say: "Take heed that no one deceives you. 6 "For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and will deceive many. 7 "But when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be troubled; for such things must happen, but the end is not yet. 8 "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines and troubles. These are the beginnings of sorrows. 9 "But watch out for yourselves, for they will deliver you up to councils, and you will be beaten in the synagogues. You will be brought before rulers and kings for My sake, for a testimony to them. 10 "And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations. 11 "But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that; for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. 12 "Now brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. 13 "And you will be hated by all

men for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end shall be saved. 14 "So when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not" (let the reader understand), "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

15 "Let him who is on the housetop not go down into the house, nor enter to take anything out of his house. 16 "And let him who is in the field not go back to get his garment. 17 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 18 "And pray that your flight may not be in winter. 19 "For in those days there will be tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of creation which God created until this time, nor ever shall be. 20 "And unless the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake, whom He chose, He shortened the days. 21 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'Look, He is there!' do not believe it. 22 "For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. 23 "But take heed; see, I have told you all things beforehand. 24 "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; 25 "the stars of heaven will fall, and the powers in heaven will be shaken. 26 "Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. 27 "And then He will send His angels, and gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven. 28 "Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender, and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.

29 "So you also, when you see these things happening, know that it is near-- at the doors! 30 "Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. 31 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. 32 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33 "Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is. 34 "It is like a man going to a far country, who left his house and gave authority to his servants, and to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to watch. 35 "Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming-- in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning-- 36 "lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. 37 "And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!" (NKJ)

### **In My Father's House**

#### **A Discussion of John 14** By Tim Warner - Revised 02/2002

*John 14* 1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2 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. 3 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. (KJV)

John fourteen one through three is sometimes quoted as evidence that Jesus taught a pre-tribulation rapture. Other pre-tribulationists believe the rapture was not revealed by Jesus at all. They believe Paul alone was the conduit for this revelation. Those who claim John fourteen teaches a pre-trib rapture believe this passage implies Jesus will take the raptured believers immediately to heaven.

The idea, that this passage teaches Christians will go to heaven after the rapture, would be strong support for pre-tribulationism and equally troublesome for post-tribulationism, **if it were true**. The post-tribulation view does not allow for the Church to go to heaven after the rapture, but directly into the Millennial Kingdom.

**Presuppositions & Bias** One of the difficulties with the way this passage is interpreted is our own personal bias. If we believe in a pre-trib rapture, we naturally would look at this passage with a bias toward pre-trib. We might assume that since Jesus was referring to coming for His disciples, He had a pre-trib rapture in view. If we already believe that Christians are going to heaven after the rapture, we would be inclined to interpret "*My Father's House*" as heaven. But, if we have a bias toward the post-trib view, we would assume Jesus was referring to the second coming. If we are going to understand this passage correctly, we need to look beyond our own presuppositions, and look at John fourteen from the perspective of the disciples, whom Jesus was addressing. We all have presuppositions that we bring to a passage. The disciples themselves had presuppositions based on their Jewish upbringing and training in the Old Testament Scriptures, and based on Jesus' prior teaching. In order to correctly interpret this passage, we must jettison our own presuppositions, and understand the presuppositions the disciples brought to Jesus' teaching. What did they already know about Jesus' coming again for them? The prior understanding of the disciples regarding Jesus' coming for them must be a crucial component of our interpretation if we are going to be fair and unbiased, and if we are going to be faithful to grammatical historical method.

Too often Christians ask the wrong question of Scripture, "*what does this passage mean to me?*" Instead, we should ask, "*what did Jesus' words mean to His disciples at the time?*" It is clear from Jesus' own words in this very discourse that He was teaching His disciples ONLY what they could understand and digest at the time. He told them, "**I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.** Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come." (John 16:12-13). Notice that eschatology was one of the things the Holy Spirit would further develop for them at a later date. It is apparent Jesus was only giving the disciples information they could receive and digest at the time. John 14:1-3 should be interpreted by us only as it WOULD have been understood by the disciples at the time. They would understand Jesus' teaching based on their knowledge of Old Testament Scriptures and Jesus' prior teaching to them.

**Using a Double Standard** The difficulty that has yet to be overcome by pre-tribulationists is how to reconcile these verses with the Olivet Discourse. That discourse, occurring only two days earlier, was a lengthy discussion of the last days and the second coming. There is no pre-trib coming or rapture in the Olivet Discourse. The only coming of Christ mentioned by Jesus will occur "*immediately after the tribulation*" (Matt. 24:29-31). Jesus had given them a series of signs for which to watch. By paying attention to these signs they could know when His coming was "*near, even at the doors*" (Matt. 24:33). Then Jesus told them this:

*Mark 13:32-37* But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. 33 Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. 34 For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. 35 Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: 36 Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. 37 And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch. (KJV)

"That day" and "that hour" refer to Jesus' coming after the tribulation mentioned in the previous verses. The "*man taking a far journey*" was Jesus. He was about to return to heaven. That He "*gave authority to His servants and to every man his work*" refers to the Great Commission. Obviously, this concerns Christians, since the Great Commission was given to the disciples, and was passed down to us through the disciples. Likewise, the commands to watch for Jesus' coming "*immediately after the tribulation*" were given to the disciples, and

passed on to us in succeeding generations as well. But, the point I would like to stress is the disciples' expectation from the Olivet Discourse was most certainly that Jesus would come back for them after the tribulation, not before.

Typically, pre-tribulationists disqualify the Olivet Discourse from any discussion of the rapture by claiming it is Jewish, and does not concern the Church. However, any reasoning they employ to disassociate the Olivet Discourse from the Church must also be applied to the Upper Room Discourse. Both were given to Jesus' disciples only two days apart, both in the midst of a Jewish setting. If the disciples "represent" a remnant of Jewish "tribulation saints" in the Olivet Discourse, why not in John fourteen? Just what in John 14 distinguishes this discourse from the Olivet Discourse, particularly since they were in the midst of observing the Jewish Passover? Isn't this a double standard? If we are going to do the Word of God justice, these two passages must be reconciled. They cannot be referring to two separate events or people groups since **they were both delivered to the disciples in view of their looking for Christ's coming for them**. The disciples could not be expecting to be persecuted by the Antichrist, watch for signs, and be gathered together "*immediately after the tribulation*," as the Olivet Discourse indicates, and still be expecting a pre-trib rapture based on John fourteen. Nor could John fourteen be simply further revelation, adding a pre-trib rapture to the scenario Jesus described on the Mount of Olives. The two ideas are mutually exclusive. The Olivet Discourse was not merely Jesus' informing them of future events for Israel. It was personal instruction to the disciples regarding watching for the signs so they would know when Jesus was coming for them. These signs would occur during and immediately after the tribulation. His parables of the fig tree, the thief in the night, the unfaithful servant, the ten virgins, and the man taking a journey (Matt. 24,25 & Mark 13), all illustrated how the disciples were to watch for the coming of Christ "*immediately after the tribulation*" mentioned in the context. The disciples were included in Jesus' "elect" who would be gathered together when Christ comes in glory, (Matt. 24:29-31). **If Jesus was teaching them a pre-trib rapture in John fourteen, He was directly negating everything He had just told them two days earlier!!!** If pre-tribulationists make the disciples representative of "Israel" in the Olivet Discourse, they must do the same in John fourteen, or they are using a double (false) standard. If the disciples represent the Church in John fourteen, they must also in the Olivet Discourse. Consistency and integrity in Biblical interpretation demands no less. The idea that Jesus taught His disciples about the second coming, using them as representatives of Israel and the Church indiscriminately without telling them, makes havoc of the Scriptures. This kind of teaching would have been incomprehensible to the disciples. It totally destroys the continuity of Jesus' teaching. **Any legitimate attempt to interpret Jesus' teaching to His disciples must harmonize all of His teaching to them.**

After the resurrection, Jesus gave them the Great Commission. Part of His instruction was to teach all new Gentile converts to "*observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you*" (Matt. 28:20). Since both the Upper Room Discourse and the Olivet Discourse were direct teaching of Jesus to His disciples, and BOTH included personal instructions and commandments regarding Jesus' coming for them, it is obvious that BOTH discourses were intended for the same people, and both must be passed on as Christian doctrine. Therefore, it is illegitimate to apply one to physical Israel and the other to the Church.

**Where was Jesus Going?** The main point of the Upper Room Discourse was Jesus' preparing His disciples for His "*going away*." The disciples still did not fully appreciate two separate advents of Christ. In the Olivet Discourse Jesus discussed the events leading up to His appearing in the clouds in glory. He also indicated that a rather lengthy period would transpire before the Millennial Kingdom would be set up. He said the gospel must be published among all nations before the end would come. The disciples did not yet understand that **Jesus would not be present with them as they preached the gospel among all nations**. In the upper room Jesus told them He must go away to prepare a place for them. No doubt, the period of His absence includes the ascension and the entire time until His second coming. This is seen in the discussion of the coming of the Comforter. Yet, His going specifically to **prepare a place for them** referred primarily to the crucifixion. Since this discourse took place the night before the crucifixion, it seems natural that Jesus was preparing the disciples for what would happen the following day. As you read John 14:1-3 within its context, you will immediately see that Jesus was speaking initially of His "going away" to the cross to redeem mankind. Jesus was preparing the disciples for the events of the following day by foretelling the crucifixion, by which He would prepare a place in the Kingdom of God for His "*little flock*." In the verses immediately preceding the passage in question, Jesus' "*going away*" meant going to the cross. This is obvious from His remark to Peter about his denial.

*John 13:31-14:3 Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. 32 If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him. 33 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. 34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. 36 Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards. 37 Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake. 38 Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice. 14:1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2 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. 3 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. (KJV)*

In verse 36, Jesus told Peter that he could not follow Him yet, but that he would follow Him afterwards. This is most likely a reference to Peter's martyrdom Jesus foretold in John 21.

*John 21:17-24 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. 18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not. 19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken thus, he saith unto him, Follow me. 20 Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? 21 Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? 22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me. 23 Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? 24 This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true. (KJV)*

Notice that Jesus left open the possibility that John might live until the second coming. But, Peter would not. He was to "follow Christ" on a cross. We know from Church history that Peter was crucified by the Romans about 30 years after Jesus. Since Jesus told Peter he could not follow Him now, but would follow Him later, His "going away" most likely had His crucifixion in view. All of this is strong evidence that Jesus was referring to His crucifixion when He first spoke of "going away" in chapter 13 and the beginning of chapter 14. His going to "prepare a place for you" should be understood within this context. Jesus was going to the cross to prepare the way of salvation, and to secure a place for His followers in His coming Kingdom.

Some might object that later in the discourse Jesus said "I go to the Father," and was therefore speaking of His ascension and not His crucifixion. However, the ascension witnessed by the disciples in Acts 1 was only the last trip to the Father, not the first. Jesus ascended to the Father earlier as part of His priestly atonement work immediately after the resurrection. Hebrews 9 indicates that the role Jesus played in the atonement was more than sacrificial, being the "Lamb of God." Jesus was BOTH the sacrifice and the High Priest who performed the atonement, by offering of His own blood in the literal presence of God in heaven.

*Heb 9:12,23-26 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.... 23 It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: 25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; 26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. (KJV)*

That Christ's role was both sacrifice and Priest is critical to understanding John 14's reference to His going to the Father. Immediately after the resurrection and coming out of the tomb, Jesus met Mary. While Mary was overwhelmed with joy, Jesus cautioned her. "Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." (John 20:17). Jesus was not referring to His ascension, as recorded in Acts 1. That took place 40 days later. He was referring to His immediate ascension to the Father to complete His priestly duty, offering His own blood in the most Holy Place in the Temple in heaven. Jesus' statement in the Upper Room Discourse, that He was "going to the Father," was connected with the atonement. Jesus appeared several times to the disciples within the 40 days after the resurrection. The "ascension" in Acts 1 is merely the last time Jesus ascended to heaven, allowing His disciples to witness it. Therefore, we can conclude that Jesus' going away and also His had to do with His atoning work. It was the atonement that Jesus was referring to when He said, "I go to prepare a place for you." He was going to make atonement for the sins of His disciples so that they could rule and reign with Him. That Jesus was referring to His impending crucifixion and performance of His High Priestly atonement activities when He said, "I go to prepare a place for you," is also evident as the conversation developed further.

*John 16:17-23 Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father? 18 They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith. 19 Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me? 20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. 21 A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. 22 And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. 23 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. (KJV)*

In this passage, did Jesus refer to His ascension and present absence from the world? Or did He refer to His crucifixion and resurrection? Was their seeing Him again in reference to the second coming? Or the resurrection of Jesus? Answer this question and it is obvious what Jesus meant by His "going away." In the above verses, Jesus told them they would have intense sorrow upon His "going away" but would be filled with joy when they saw Him again. This begs the question, when did the disciples experience great sorrow? If pre-tribbers are correct, then the disciples should have experienced great sorrow when Jesus ascended to heaven. But according to Luke, just the opposite was the case. He wrote that the disciples returned from watching Jesus' ascension "with great joy" (Luke 24:50-53). Were the disciples sorrowful when Jesus was crucified? Absolutely! Jesus' prediction of His disciples experiencing great sorrow at His going away, and great joy when they see Him again, only fits the crucifixion and resurrection. It does not fit the ascension and second coming.

Also, notice that the promise of their asking the Father directly in Jesus' name in prayer is placed AFTER their sorrow turns to joy, after they see Him again. This promise of asking the Father in prayer in Jesus' name was something reserved for after the resurrection, not after the second coming. (See John 15:16).

This is proof that Jesus' going away to prepare a place for them had absolutely NOTHING to do with returning to heaven to build Christian condominiums. It had everything to do with His making atonement for them and us, by offering Himself as the spotless Lamb of God, and performing His priestly duties by offering His own blood in the presence of the Father in the heavenly Temple. Just as the priest took the carcass of the animal outside the camp (Lev.4:21), so also Jesus suffered outside the camp.

*Heb 13:11-12 For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. 12 Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. (KJV)*

And just as the priest was not finished after killing the animal, but must offer the blood in the presence of God, so too Jesus was not finished His priestly duties until He offered His own blood in the presence of God in heaven.

*Heb 9:12,24 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. ... 24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: (KJV)*

**Jesus is not Building Christian Condos** Jesus did not go to heaven to build Christian condominiums at His final ascension. He went to sit down at the Father's right hand to await His enemies being made His footstool (Heb. 10:12,13). That Jesus was not referring to His going to heaven to construct Christian condominiums is proven by the language He used.

1. Jesus spoke of the dwelling places in the present tense. He said: "*In my Father's house **are** many dwelling places.*" **This language requires that the abodes Jesus was referring to already existed when Jesus said these words.** Jesus was simply saying He would make room for His disciples among the already existing dwelling places. 2. The word "*prepare*" does not mean to "build," but to get something ready. This is the same word Jesus used when He sent the disciples ahead to make ready (prepare) the upper room to accommodate the Passover meal. They did not build a second story on the house, but prepared the upper room to accommodate the Passover celebration. Therefore, Jesus did not go away to build anything.

In what sense would Jesus' ascension to heaven have anything to do with making ready (or preparing) already existing "abodes" to accommodate His disciples, or making the way for the disciples to occupy these abodes? Where is such an idea taught in Scripture? The fact is, this idea is completely foreign to Scripture, and is based solely on pre-trib presuppositions.

**What is "My Father's House?"** The words "*my Father's house*" do not refer to heaven. We cannot arbitrarily assign a meaning to this phrase without biblical precedent. It must be interpreted in the same manner we interpret any other biblical phrase, by looking at other occurrences of this and similar phrases. I can find no precedent in Scripture for supposing "*my Father's house*" means heaven. In the numerous Old Testament passages which mention the "*house of the Lord*," the Temple is always in view. This includes the Tabernacle [1 Samuel 1:24], Solomon's Temple (2 Chronicles 2:1, 7:16), as specifically to the Millennial Temple and Kingdom (Isaiah 2:2-4, Joel 3:18). The biblical writers never referred to heaven as the Lord's house. The "*house of the Lord*" is always earthly and related to the Temple, which will be the locus of Christ's Kingdom. Here is one example.

*Isa 2:2-4 And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of **the LORD's house** shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. 3 And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to **the house of the God of Jacob**; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 4 And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. (KJV)*

In the New Testament, occasionally the "Church" is called the Lord's dwelling in a metaphorical sense, Eph. 2:19-22. But, the disciples were not familiar with this metaphorical usage by Paul, and would certainly not understand Jesus' words as a metaphor. They would understand His words in light of their familiarity with the Old Testament usage, and Jesus' earlier usage of the phrase "*my Father's house*."

*John 2:15-17 And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them out of **the Temple**.... 16 And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not **my Father's house** an house of merchandise. 17 And the disciples remembered that it was written, **The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.** (KJV)*

Here Jesus unquestionably referred to the Temple in Jerusalem as "*my Father's house*." Verse 17 shows the disciples associated Jesus' expression with an Old Testament reference to the "*house of the Lord*," [Psalm 69:9]. Therefore, it is natural they would understand the same expression in John fourteen in the same way.

*Luke 2:46,49 After three days they found him in **the temple courts**, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.... 49 "Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in **my Father's house**?" (NIV)*

The disciples expected the Kingdom of God to be centered in Jerusalem, specifically in the Temple, (see: Isaiah 2:1-5, Psalm 68:29). In the Olivet Discourse, only two days before, Jesus emphasized their waiting and watching for **the coming of His Kingdom**, (Matt. 25:31, Luke 21:31). This was the focus of their hope. The disciples were familiar with the Old Testament usage of the term "house of the Lord" in reference to the Temple in Jerusalem. They were also familiar with Jesus' previous usage of the phrase "*my Father's house*" also in reference to the Temple. They were not familiar with modern pre-trib eschatology. It is virtually certain they understood Jesus to mean He was going to prepare a place in His Kingdom for them, more specifically in the Temple from which Jesus would rule. When He returned they would accompany Him to His Kingdom. "*And if I go away, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.*"

In Luke's parallel account of the Upper Room Discourse, there is more evidence Jesus was speaking of His Kingdom and not heaven in the upper room. While Luke did not record Jesus' statement about His "*Father's house*," it is clear from his account that the context of the discussion was indeed the coming of Christ's Kingdom to earth.

*Luke 22:15-18,28-30 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: 16 For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled **in the kingdom of God**. 17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: 18 For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, **until the kingdom of God shall come**.... 28 Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. 29 And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; 30 **That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.** (KJV)*

According to Luke's account, Jesus spoke of His Kingdom in the upper room and mentioned nothing of heaven. When Jesus said in John 14, "*In my Father's house are many mansions [dwelling places], I go to prepare a place for you,*" He was speaking of the sacrifice of the Lamb of God in order to prepare a place in His Kingdom for His "*little flock*." Luke places them ruling beside Christ on twelve thrones, and eating with Him at His own table in the coming Kingdom. This places the disciples in the Millennial Temple, ruling with Christ in His Kingdom.

As the disciples listened to Jesus' words, they had to assimilate His new teaching with what He had previously taught them and their knowledge of the Old Testament. Based on a synthesis of all of this material, the disciples could only conclude that when Jesus returned they would accompany Him to His Kingdom, where they would sit on thrones and reign with Him. This is why, after the resurrection, they asked Jesus; "*Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?*" (Acts 1:6). They apparently believed His death was all there was to His "*going away*," and mistakenly thought the resurrection was His return, apparently thinking He was about to streak through the sky gathering together all the elect. After all, He told them only days before, "*If I go away, I will come again and receive you unto myself.*" Of course Jesus had to correct their error by referring them back to the Olivet Discourse. The Gospel must first be preached among all nations, (Acts 1:8). But the important point here is apparent. Even after the resurrection, and in spite of their error, they were looking for Christ's Kingdom, not a trip to heaven.

**Many Mansions** The Disciples were not only familiar with the Temple from Scripture, but had gone to the Temple complex many times. They had been at the Temple with Jesus the very day Jesus gave the Olivet Discourse. They were therefore familiar with the beautiful

architecture of the Temple complex (Matt. 24:1) which included many apartments (mansions) which lined the Temple structure designed for the Temple priests (1 Kings 6:5-10 & 1 Chron. 9:26,27). Jesus said that the "many dwellings" in "My Father's House" (Temple) would be made ready for them. He told them they would rule with Him on twelve thrones and eat with Him at His table in His Kingdom. Knowing all this, the disciples no doubt imagined themselves as the Royal governing Cabinet, occupying the luxurious apartments at the Temple. The disciples were no doubt also familiar with Ezekiel 40-44, which describes in detail the many "chambers" (apartments) that will be a part of the future Kingdom Temple from which Christ will rule. It would be natural for them to associate the "*many mansions*" with these chambers, since they clearly associated Jesus' expression, "*my Father's house*" with the Temple, (John 2:16-19, Psalm 69:9).

Josephus, who was an eyewitness of the Temple of Jesus' day, described the apartments connected to the Temple structure atop the Temple Mount as follows. "*Now, about the sides of the lower part of the temple, there were little houses, with passages out of one into another; there were a great many of them, and they were of three stories high; there were also entrances on each side into them from the gate of the temple.*"

Those occupying the "*many mansions*" at that time were not fit to rule with the Messiah. Jesus told them so in the hearing of His disciples, the very day He gave the Olivet Discourse. "*And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?*" (Matt. 21:23). Within ear-shot of these "many mansions," and speaking directly to the ones who were occupying them at the time, Jesus responded with the parable of the husbandmen who had custody of God's vineyard. But they beat His servants, and killed His Son. The result was they were destroyed by the land owner, and the vineyard given to others. This parable was meant to convict the chief priests and elders of their rejection of Jesus, and give them their eviction notice. Jesus closed His remarks with the following statement. "*Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.*" (vs. 43). But to His disciples Jesus said: "*Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom*" (Luke 12:32).

When we compare these verses to Jesus' statements that the disciples would sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel in His Kingdom, the picture becomes clear. The disciples were chosen, not only to spread the gospel, but to replace the unfaithful Jewish priests in the Millennial Kingdom. This does not mean the Church replaces Israel, usurping her place and promises. The Disciples were Jewish, yet also the elders of the Church. The "Church" is purified Israel, with Gentiles adopted into Abraham's seed, forming one body of redeemed people. I realize some may object to this view because there are certainly not enough "apartments" in the Kingdom Temple for the whole Church. But, as Luke's account indicates, Jesus was not speaking to all future Christians here, only His disciples. Certainly He did not mean for the whole Church to sit on twelve thrones and judge Israel! Both the passage in Luke twenty-two and John fourteen were meant for those disciples who "*have continued with me in my temptations.*" (Luke 22:28). All saints of God will reign with Him in His Kingdom. But, the disciples earned a special place, ruling from Christ's side in the Temple. Other believers who suffer for Christ will be given positions of authority over various cities, (Luke 19:11-26, 2 Tim. 2:12).

Some may object that this view merges God's programs for Israel and the Church. However, this objection stems from excessive dispensationalism, not proper exegesis of the passages concerned. While there will be national distinctions in the Millennium, there will not be dispensational distinctions. There is only one program for both Jew and Gentile. There will be only one body of redeemed people who were saved prior to Christ's second coming. This will include Old and New Testament saints. "*And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God*" (Luke 13:29). And again, "*When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*" (Matt. 8:10-12).

See our series on [Progressive Dispensationalism](#) for more regarding the dispensational ramifications. See our article [Jewish Wedding Customs & the Rapture](#) for a discussion of how John 14 relates to the Jewish Wedding Customs.

### **Conclusion**

There is no reason to separate Jesus' coming again in John 14 from what He had just told the disciples two days earlier on the Mount of Olives. As we attempt to apply the grammatical-historical method of interpretation to John 14:1-3, we must take into account the following things:

1. the context in which Jesus was speaking to going away to be crucified
2. the disciples' familiarity with Old Testament references to the "*house of the Lord*"
3. Jesus' earlier usage of the phrase "*My Father's house*"
4. Jesus' instructions in the Olivet Discourse given only 2 days earlier
5. the parallel passage in Luke 22, which shows the context of the discussion was the coming Kingdom
6. the apparent implication of the Jewish wedding custom associated with the "Father's house" See our article [Jewish Wedding Customs & the Rapture](#).

I do not mean to imply that a mansion in the sky is unbiblical. God has prepared a city for us, the New Jerusalem, described in Revelation twenty-one. However, it will not be presented to us until the end of the millennium, (Rev. 21:2). The mistake is the idea that the words "my Father's house" in John fourteen refer to heaven or the New Jerusalem. There is no precedent in Scripture for this interpretation and all evidence of similar language points to the Temple in Jerusalem during the Kingdom age. The pre-trib view of these verses hangs entirely on assumptions which cannot be substantiated from other Scriptures, and flow counter to everything else Jesus taught His disciples.

Given the Jewish background of the disciples, their familiarity with the Temple complex, their knowledge of the Old Testament, and their instruction in the Kingdom of God by Jesus, it is natural to conclude that they expected to experience the tribulation Jesus mentioned two days earlier, and be raptured at the coming of Jesus Christ immediately after it. They would then take up residence in the Temple "*mansions*," ruling with Christ seated on His right hand and on His left. The priests, who were at that time occupying the priestly chambers at the Temple, Jesus said would be evicted and locked out of His Kingdom.

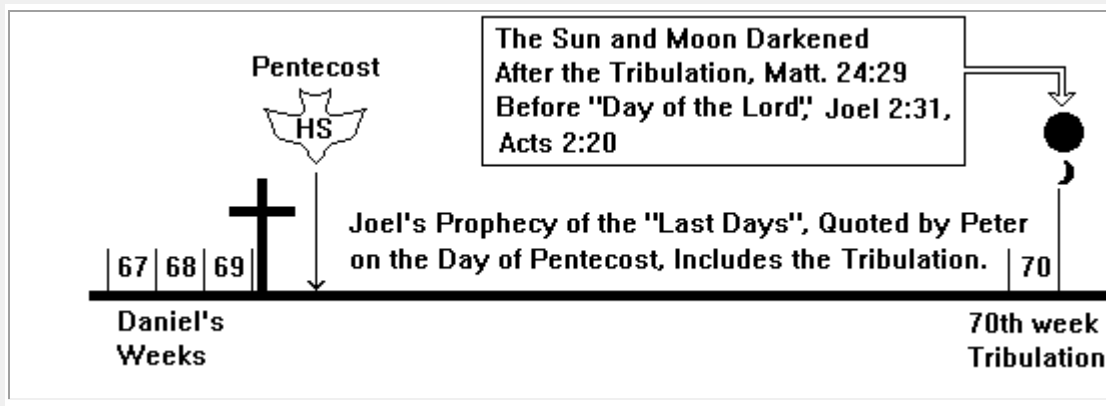
**Peter's First Sermon Acts 2:16-21** Tim Warner - Revised 2/2002

After Jesus gave the Apostles the Great Commission and ascended to heaven, they began preaching the gospel. Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, delivered one of the most powerful sermons recorded in Scripture. In this sermon he masterfully tied together Old Testament prophecy with what Jesus taught in His Olivet Discourse.

*Acts 2 18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: 19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: 21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. (KJV)*

This passage of Scripture is very important to a proper understanding of prophecy. It sheds a great deal of light on Jesus' teaching in the Olivet Discourse, and Peter's application of Joel's prophecy demonstrates for us how Peter interpreted Jesus' teaching. Peter was present when Jesus taught the disciples about His coming. Jesus answered their question; "what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" [Matt. 24:3]. Peter knew from Jesus' teaching that the final sign, which will occur "immediately after the tribulation," is the darkening of the sun and moon, [Matt. 24:29-31].

On the day of Pentecost, Peter placed himself within Joel's prophecy of the "last days" [Acts 2:17]. According to Peter, the "last days" had already begun. This period would conclude with the coming of the "Day of the Lord," which would be heralded by the same cosmic signs Jesus said would occur "immediately after the tribulation." It is apparent, from Peter's use of Joel's prophecy, he expected to continue with the task of world evangelism **until the end of the tribulation**. The statement, "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," spans the time from Pentecost until the cosmic signs at the end of the tribulation. Peter made this connection, no doubt, because Jesus said the gospel must first be preached among all nations before He would return, "immediately after the tribulation."



According to Peter, between the Day of Pentecost, and the cosmic signs "immediately after the tribulation," the Spirit of God would be poured out upon all flesh. During this day of grace, which includes the tribulation, anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

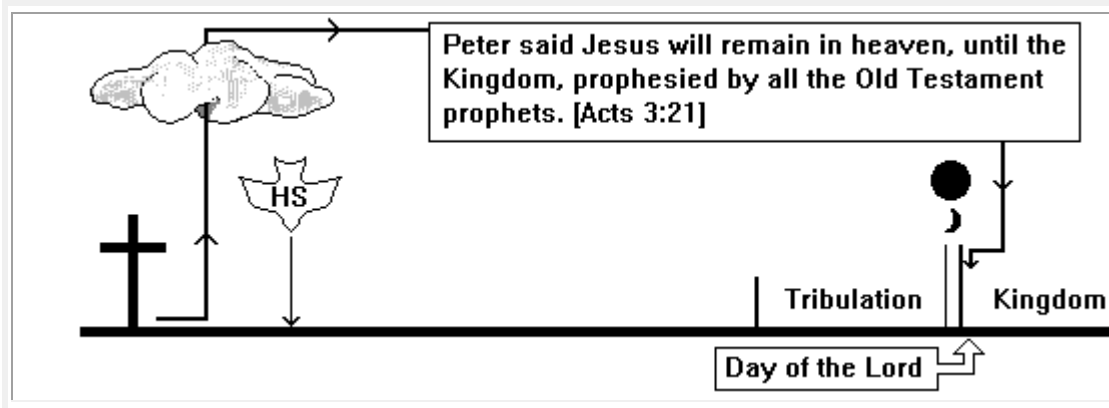
If we pick out the two most important signs Jesus gave His disciples in Matthew twenty-four, they would be the preaching of the gospel to all the world [Matt. 24:14], and the cosmic signs just before His coming [Matt. 24:29]. These two signs must have had a huge impact on Peter, because he alluded to both in his sermon. Peter indicated to the crowd when the present age of grace will end. It will end when the sun and moon are darkened. It will end with blood, fire, and pillars of smoke at the battle of Armageddon. Undoubtedly, Peter believed the "end of the [age]" would come "immediately after the tribulation," just as Jesus taught him.

**Peter's Second Sermon Acts 3:17-21** Tim Warner - Revised 2/2002

In Acts three, we find a second sermon preached by Peter. The healing of the lame man at the gate of the Temple caused a stir among the crowd assembled to worship. Peter seized the opportunity to preach the gospel right on the Temple mount. In his invitation at the close of his sermon he made the following statement.

*Acts 3 19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; 20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: 21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. (KJV)*

The coming of the Messiah and His Kingdom was foretold by all the prophets. In fact, this a the major theme of most of them. This is when Jesus will restore all things and the curse will be removed from the earth, [Isaiah 2:1-4, Isaiah 35, Zech. 14:1, 8-11, Rom. 8:19-23]. Peter held out this coming of Christ as the future hope for new converts to the Church. He declared that Jesus must remain in heaven until this Kingdom, foretold by the prophets, comes. There is no question this will occur at the post-tribulation coming of Christ.



Peter did not originate this idea. He borrowed it from Psalm 110:1. There is no doubt Peter was familiar with this Psalm because he quoted it in his previous sermon to prove that Jesus was the Messiah.

*Acts 2 34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, 35 until I make thy foes thy footstool. (KJV)*

It is clear, both from this Psalm and from Peter's commentary on it in Acts 3:19-21, that Jesus will be seated at the Father's side until the time comes to restore the earth, and destroy Christ's enemies. This eliminates the possibility of Jesus coming before the tribulation to rapture the Church to heaven. He would have to leave the Father's right hand before His enemies are made His footstool.

Both of Peter's sermons display continuity with Jesus' teaching in Matthew twenty-four. The fact that he taught Jesus' chronology of the tribulation and second coming to believers after the day of Pentecost strongly suggests that Jesus taught "Church doctrine" in the Olivet Discourse.

### Peter's Epistles

#### The Revelation of Jesus Christ Tim Warner - Revised 2/2002

For an in-depth study of 2 Peter 3 and the Day of the Lord, [Click here](#).

Lest someone think Peter might have changed his mind later, we find him still teaching believers to anticipate Christ's post-tribulation coming in glory in his Epistles, rather than a secret rapture. His testimony is consistent in both of his sermons and both of his Epistles.

*1 Peter 1 7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, (NKJV)*

*1 Peter 1 13 Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; (KJV)*

Peter encouraged believers to remain faithful to Christ until the "revelation of Jesus Christ." The word "revelation" is the Greek word "apocalypsis." This word is used of the second coming several times. Each time it has the idea of Christ's coming in glory, showing Himself to the world in all His awesome power. Paul gave a vivid picture of the revelation of Christ in the following verse.

*II Thessalonians 1 7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: (KJV)*

Peter went on to warn believers of the coming trial, encouraging them to remain faithful, and partake gladly in suffering for Christ. Again he encouraged them to fix their hope on Christ's coming in glory and power, just as in the Olivet Discourse, [Matt. 24:29-31].

*1 Peter 4 12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: 13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. (KJV)*

The "fiery trial" was a specific time of testing that would end with the revelation of Christ in glory. The King James Version, by using the definite article and future tense, ["the fiery trial which is to try you"], indicates it was a trial that would come in the future to try them all. Most likely, he was referring to the tribulation, although this is not certain from the text. However, the important point here is that Peter encouraged them to place their hope in Christ's coming in glory and power. This is definitely not a secret rapture. Christ's coming in glory is always post-tribulation, [Matt. 16:27, 24:20, 25:31, Mark 8:38, 13:26, Luke 9:26, 21:27, 2 Thess. 1:9].

In his second Epistle, Peter devoted the entire third chapter to the second coming. He addressed the apparent delay in Christ's return from the perspectives of ungodly scoffers, and believers, longing for Christ's return. In verses 3-7, Peter wrote that this delay should not be interpreted by unbelievers that Christ is not coming. Then he told believers the reason for the delay.

*2 Peter 3 9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. (KJV)*

Notice, it does not say the Lord is longsuffering to the lost, but to us. He does not want any to perish. This strongly implies God is waiting for Christians to complete the Great Commission! This idea comes directly from the Olivet Discourse, and was reinforced by Jesus after the resurrection.

*Matthew 24 14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. (KJV)*

*Acts 1 6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? 7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. 8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. (KJV)*

Peter went on to describe the coming of the Lord, calling it the "Day of the Lord," [vs. 10], and the "Day of God," [vs.12]. In his first sermon, Peter clearly established the fact that the Day of the Lord will come after the cosmic signs, the darkening of the sun and moon. And, Jesus told him these same signs would occur "immediately after the tribulation."

*Acts 2 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: (KJV)*

*Matthew 24 29 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: (KJV)*

Peter connected the expected coming of Christ for Christians with the coming of the "Day of the Lord" [Compare vs. 9&10]. And, he understood this to occur "immediately after the tribulation."

It is interesting to note that Peter repeated himself in verse 12, but substituted the phrase "Day of God" for the phrase "Day of the Lord." No doubt the phrases are interchangeable. The "Day of God" is found only one other time in the Bible, and it is undeniably in a post-trib setting, [Rev. 16:13-16].

No hint of pre-tribulationism can be found in Peter's sermons or Epistles. He faithfully obeyed the command of Christ by repeating Jesus' teaching concerning the blessed hope of believers.

### **The Last Trumpet**

#### **1 Corinthians 15:50-54** Tim Warner - Revised 2/2002

Most pre-tribbers believe the pre-trib rapture was not taught by Jesus, but was given to Paul as a special revelation. Therefore, it is important for us to see if what Paul taught about the rapture is distinct from Jesus' teaching. If there are mutually exclusive differences between what Jesus taught about His second coming, and what Paul taught about the rapture, we might conclude they were speaking about different events, as pre-tribbers suppose. However, if Paul's teaching about the rapture is compatible with Jesus' teaching about the second coming, there is no reason to suppose that Paul taught a distinct coming of Christ apart from the coming Jesus mentioned.

Post-tribbers believe Paul's teaching concerning the rapture is completely compatible with, and built upon, the teaching of Jesus in the Olivet Discourse. There were some new details added by Paul, but the general sequence of events are identical.

In 1 Cor. 15, Paul wrote primarily of the resurrection of believers, and the fact that we will be raised "incorruptible." We do not have space here for an in-depth exegesis of this passage. However, I would like to point out three things that I believe connect this event to Jesus' post-tribulation coming in Matthew twenty-four.

1. Paul said the reason our bodies will be changed is because; *"flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God"* [1 Cor. 15:50]. The future "Kingdom of God" he is speaking of is the Millennial Kingdom. Since the purpose for this putting on incorruption is because our old bodies cannot inherit the Millennial Kingdom to reign with Christ, this implies that the change would occur at the beginning of that Kingdom. There is nothing here about going to heaven. Heaven is never spoken of as the "Kingdom of God." The context also clearly indicates Paul was referring to the Millennium, [see: vs. 22-28].

2. Paul said this will occur *"at the last trumpet"* [1 Cor. 15:52]. If we were to assume a pre-trib scenario, this "last trumpet" could not be last, because Jesus said He will sound the **trumpet** to gather His elect *"immediately after the tribulation"* [Matt. 24:31]. In order for it to be "last," it would seem to be identical with the trumpet of which Jesus spoke, thereby placing the resurrection of believers after the tribulation.

3. When this transformation occurs, Paul said an Old Testament prophecy will be fulfilled.

*1 Cor 15:54 54 So **WHEN** this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, **THEN** shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, **Death is swallowed up in victory.** (KJV)*

This is a direct quote of Isaiah 25:8. And, Isaiah's prophecy is clearly speaking of the coming of Christ's Millennial Kingdom. **Paul said that this particular Millennial prophecy will be fulfilled at the resurrection of the Church.** Therefore, the rapture must occur at the beginning of the Kingdom, which is post-tribulation.

These three things connect this passage with the post-tribulation coming of Christ. What can pre-tribbers point to in this passage that would exclude this connection, or demonstrate the uniqueness of the Pauline "rapture" that pre-tribbers allege? Nothing at all! So far Paul's writings agree and harmonize with what Jesus taught in the Olivet Discourse.

### **Paul's Rapture View**

#### **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

Tim Warner - Revised 2/2002

Paul indicated to these Christians, and his main reason for addressing the resurrection / rapture, was so they would not sorrow as those who had no hope. It is apparent the Thessalonians had a question about the resurrection that Paul was trying to answer. Their sorrowing had to do with those who had died. In his answer, Paul clarified the exact events surrounding the resurrection and rapture. While the question is not stated, we can reconstruct it from Paul's answer. Notice his answer linked the **timing of the resurrection** to the catching up of the living saints. Therefore, their question most likely concerned the fact of, and the timing of, the resurrection of the dead in Christ. Notice that Paul, in answering their question, assumed his readers were familiar with the Lord's coming itself. He attached the timing of the resurrection of dead saints to an event they were already familiar with, the catching up of the living saints.

*1 Thess. 4:13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain **unto the coming of the Lord** shall not prevent [or precede] them which are asleep.*

I want you to notice that before Paul begins to speak of the timing of the resurrection, he mentioned *"the coming of the Lord"* as though they were already familiar with this event. He took it for granted that they knew what the *"coming of the Lord"* was. Then he proceeded to link the timing of the resurrection of the dead saints to this event.

*16 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:** 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.*

These believers were already familiar with the Lord's descending from heaven, and the living believers being caught up in the clouds when the trumpet sounds. Paul simply placed the resurrection of the dead saints in the proper place in the sequence of events. In essence, Paul does this by saying that the dead saints will rise just before we are "caught up." So, it appears that the Thessalonians were familiar with Christ's coming, and the "catching up" of the living believers. But, they were not sure where the resurrection of the dead saints fit in. How is it that they knew about the coming of Christ, and the catching up of the living saints, but did not understand where the resurrection fit in? It is because of their familiarity with the Olivet Discourse. In that passage, Jesus described His coming, and the gathering of the elect, but He did not specifically mention the resurrection of the dead.

*Matthew 24:29 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: 30 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. 31 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's words would, no doubt, bring to memory the words of Christ in the Olivet Discourse. Notice the similar language. Both mention the coming of the Lord. Both mention the sounding of the trumpet to gather His own. Both mention angelic participation. But when we look at Jesus' words, we see that He did not mention the resurrection of the saints specifically in the Olivet Discourse. Based on these things, the Thessalonians' question for Paul becomes apparent. They wanted to know, when the trumpet sounds, and Jesus comes in power and glory, sending His angels to gather His elect, what will happen to those who have previously died? Will they be raised to witness the revelation of Christ to the world in all His glory, and to participate in the establishment of Christ's Kingdom? Or will they be raised at some other time? Or perhaps not at all? The fact that Jesus only spoke of the living, and did not place the resurrection in His sequence of events described in the Olivet Discourse, caused these Christians to worry about their departed brethren not participating in the spectacular events surrounding Christ's revelation to the world in power and glory, and the setting up of His Millennial Kingdom. Paul's answer indicates that this was indeed the problem. By linking the timing of the resurrection to the gathering of the living that Jesus spoke of, Paul completely resolved the problem for them, and gave them reason for hope regarding their loved ones who had died.

Again, so far we find nothing in Paul's writings that conflicts with the scenario described by Jesus. And, we also see Paul's relying on Jesus' Olivet Discourse. In the articles that follow, you will see that Paul actually used the Olivet Discourse as a backdrop for His teaching about the rapture. Jesus' teaching was the authority, and Paul simply supplemented it with additional details, and dealt with questions arising from Jesus' discourse.

### **The "Day of the Lord"**

#### **1 Thessalonians 5:1-9** Tim Warner - Revised 2/2002

In 1 Thess. 4, Paul dealt with the relationship of the resurrection to the rapture. The dead in Christ will rise first, then the living will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Paul continued in chapter 5 by addressing the question of when they might expect the rapture and resurrection to come.

*1 Thessalonians 5 1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. 2 **For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.** (KJV)*

Notice Paul was placing the rapture in the "Day of the Lord." This is an extremely important point. Here Paul shifted from describing the events surrounding the rapture to speaking about when the rapture might come. And he referred them again to something they already knew, "yourselves know perfectly..." The "Day of the Lord" was coming as a "thief in the night."

Paul used a phrase that was familiar to these Christians. The "Day of the Lord" is found several times in the Old Testament, always in the context of Christ's coming to destroy the enemies of Israel, [see: Isa. 13:6-13, Joel 3:9-17, Zech. 14]. This is exactly what Revelation 19 records as the "battle of Armageddon."

The nature of the "Day of the Lord" is crucial to understanding this passage. It is also critical to any foundational understanding of eschatology in general. Pre-tribulationists claim the "Day of the Lord" includes the alleged pre-trib rapture and the entire tribulation. This allows them to reconcile 1 Thessalonians 5 with pre-tribulationism, since Paul instructed believers to be watching for the "Day of the Lord," [1 Thess. 5:1-6]. If the "Day of the Lord" comes after the tribulation, as every Old Testament occurrence seems to indicate, then Christians must still be here at the end of the tribulation in order to watch for that day.

Much has been written by pre-tribulationists trying to stretch the Day of the Lord forward to include the entire tribulation and pre-trib rapture. Comparisons of similar themes, such as wrath, judgment, etc. have been offered as evidence. Yet, no one has provided any biblical requirement supporting making them synonymous. None of the Old Testament passages support this conclusion. It comes only from a preconceived assumption of a pre-trib rapture superimposed on the Thessalonian passage. Their theory is a product of reverse engineering of the Scriptures in order to get the desired outcome rather than applying sound rules of interpretation. The fact is, there are definite biblical passages that forbid the "Day of the Lord" from overlapping the tribulation. The two are mutually exclusive.

First, throughout the Old Testament, a catastrophic sign is associated with the coming of the "Day of the Lord." The darkening of the sun and moon will herald that day. [See: Isaiah 13:9,10, Isaiah 24:19-23, Joel 3:13-15]. Here is one example.

*Joel 2 31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come. (KJV)*

*Matthew 24 29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, ... (KJV)*

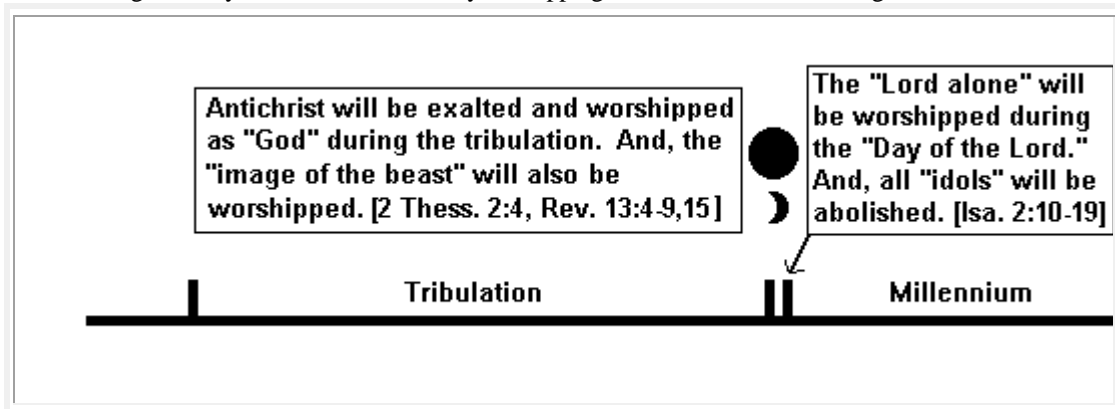
These verses establish a clear sequence of events. They place the cosmic signs, the darkening of the sun and moon, **between** the end of the tribulation and the beginning of the "Day of the Lord."



This absolutely forbids any overlapping of the tribulation into the "Day of the Lord." They are distinct events. No other interpretation is possible without doing violence to these passages. Secondly, the very first time the "Day of the Lord" is mentioned in the Bible, the text clearly forbids associating it with the tribulation. Isaiah two describes the "Day of the Lord" with the following words:

*Isaiah 2 10 Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty. 11 The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day. 12 For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low:... 17 And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day. 18 And the idols he shall utterly abolish. 19 And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth. (KJV)*

Twice these verses indicate that **the Lord alone** will be exalted in the "Day of the Lord." This is an exclusive statement. **No one else can be exalted or worshipped during the "Day of the Lord."** Yet, during the tribulation, the Antichrist will be worshipped as God. [See: Rev. 13:3-8,14 & 2 Thess. 2:3,4] And, his image will be worshipped as well. Isaiah's statements about the Lord alone being exalted, and the idols being abolished during the "Day of the Lord," forbid any overlapping with the tribulation and reign of Antichrist.



The celestial sign, and the statements in Isaiah two, absolutely forbid stretching the "Day of the Lord" forward to include the tribulation, as pre-tribbers attempt to do. Furthermore, Paul made another clear statement which eliminates the possibility of the "Day of the Lord" including the entire tribulation and supposed pre-trib rapture.

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

Most translations read "Day of the Lord" in verse 2. There is a variation in the Greek manuscripts here. Some ancient manuscripts read "day of Christ" and others read "day of the Lord." I don't want to get into a debate on which is correct. It really doesn't matter. If "Day of the Lord" is correct, the text indicates that the "Day of the Lord" comes after the tribulation, because events that occur during the tribulation, [the falling away and revelation of Antichrist], are said to come **before** the "Day of the Lord." If the "Day of Christ" is the correct reading, then this verse alone settles the pre-trib / post-trib debate, since the phrase "Day of Christ" is only used by Paul elsewhere to refer to the rapture of the Church. In this case, Paul is saying that the rapture cannot come until after the falling away and the Antichrist.

The meaning of the phrase "Day of the Lord" holds the key to the interpretation of Paul's instructions to believers in 1 Thessalonians. The meaning of 1 Thessalonians 4:13 - 5:9 is entirely dependent on the meaning of this phrase. There is no question the rapture and the coming of the "Day of the Lord" are firmly connected by Paul in this passage. He uses the term "Day of the Lord" as a synonym for the rapture. **Notice Paul instructed Christians to be watching for the coming of the "Day of the Lord."** And, as we have just demonstrated, the "Day of the Lord" is after the tribulation. **Therefore, Christians must pass through the tribulation in order to watch for the "Day of the Lord."** The rapture that Paul referred to is after the tribulation.

*1 Thess 5:2-6 2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. 3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.*

**4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. 5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. 6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. (KJV)**

Since he instructed Christians to watch for the "Day of the Lord," and, as we have seen, that day comes after the tribulation, Paul was simply confirming Jesus' teaching in the Olivet Discourse. There is nothing here to suggest new revelation of a secret pre-trib rapture. In fact the opposite is true. Paul said in verse 2 that they already knew this perfectly. He was simply refreshing their memory. Yes, in chapter 4 Paul gave them some new revelation. He placed the timing of the resurrection just before the catching up of the living. This exact sequence was previously unknown to them. But, in chapter 5, his comment about their being already familiar with the coming of the Day of the Lord, indicates he was now pointing them back to something already revealed in Scripture.

How did the Thessalonian believers know perfectly that the Day of the Lord was coming as a "thief in the night?" Because they were familiar with Jesus' teaching in the Olivet Discourse! The idea of Christ's coming as a "thief in the night" was originated by Jesus Himself when describing His coming. After describing His coming in glory "immediately after the tribulation," Jesus said to His disciples:

*Matt 24:42-44 42 "Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. 43 "But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. 44 "Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. (NKJV)*

Obviously, Paul was referring to Jesus' teaching! His reminding them of Jesus' "thief" illustration leads to the conclusion that he was confirming the chronology Christ gave. The following table shows that Paul was using Jesus' teaching in the Olivet Discourse as the basis of his instructions to the Thessalonian believers. He was simply repeating Jesus' instructions to the disciples. In effect, he was applying the teaching of Jesus to them, connecting their "watching" for the rapture with Jesus' instructions to be watching for His coming "immediately after the tribulation."

Paul Referred to Jesus' Teaching	Jesus	Paul
Coming of the Lord from heaven	Matt 24:30 "... they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."	1 Thess. 4:16 "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven..."
Angel(s)	Matt. 24:31 "...He shall send forth His angels..."	1 Thess. 4:16 "with the voice of the archangel..."
Trumpet blast	Matt. 24:31 "...with the sound of a trumpet..."	1 Thess. 4:16 "...with the trumpet of God"
Catching up of the living	Matt. 24:31 "...they shall gather together His elect..."	1 Thess. 4:17 "...shall be caught up together..."
Thief in the night	Matt. 24:43 "...if the goodman ...had know in what watch the thief would come..."	1 Thess. 5:1,2 "...so cometh as a thief in the night."
Warning against "sleeping"	Mark 13:36 "lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping."	1 Thess. 5:6 "...let us not sleep as do others"
Warning against "drunkenness"	Luke 21:34 "take heed ... lest your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness"	1 Thess. 5:6-8 "be sober...they that are drunken are drunken in the night. ...be sober"
"Watching" for Christ's coming	Mark 13:35-37 "Watch ye therefore ... What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch."	1 Thess. 5:6 "let us watch..."

There is no question that Paul referred his readers to the Olivet Discourse, which only teaches a post-trib coming of Christ, to answer their questions about the rapture. This is substantial evidence that Paul taught a post-trib rapture. His use of the phrase "Day of the Lord," which other Scriptures place after the tribulation, to describe the rapture, makes it impossible to reconcile this passage with pre-tribulationism, in my opinion. Once again, we have every reason to connect Paul's teaching on the rapture to Jesus' teaching on the second coming. Nothing here excludes this linkage. And as the table above illustrates, there is much evidence of this connection. Therefore, the natural inference is Paul was simply building on Jesus' teaching, and was encouraging the Thessalonian believers to be watching for Jesus' coming after the tribulation!

Here is another reason the "Day of the Lord" cannot be stretched forward to include the tribulation in this passage. Paul wrote, "when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." Notice it is those who are surprised by the sudden coming of the Day of the Lord that encounter sudden destruction with **NO ESCAPE** possible! In a pre-trib scheme, where the Day of the Lord is supposed to be the beginning of the tribulation, many of those who enter the tribulation, and consequently are among those surprised by the coming of the Day of the Lord, are still saved to become the multitude of "tribulation saints." Therefore, Paul's statement that "they will not escape" is necessarily false if the pre-trib theory is true! Paul's point is clearly that all those who are "in darkness" and who are surprised by the coming of the Day of the Lord will encounter "sudden destruction" and none of them will escape! This is precisely what Paul also indicates in 2 Thess. 1, as we will see in the next article.

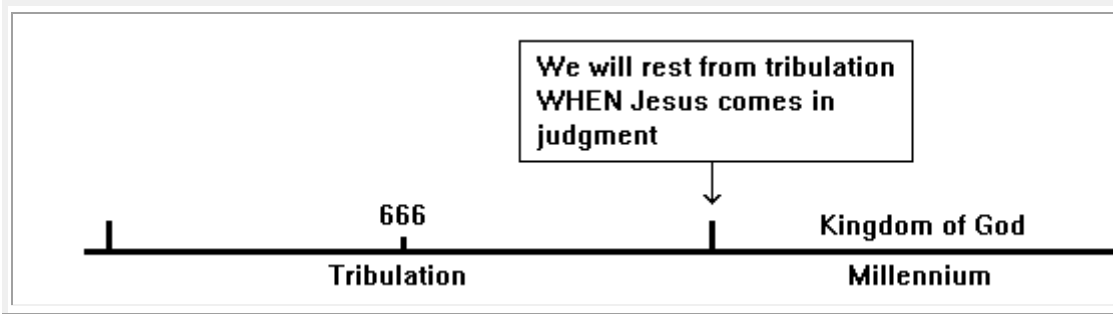
**We Rest After the Tribulation**

**2 Thessalonians 1:4-10** Tim Warner - Revised 2/2002

Second Thessalonians was written soon after the first Epistle to correct further questions and misconceptions about the coming of Christ. In his previous Epistle, Paul tied the resurrection to the rapture, thereby comforting them concerning those who had died. In the fifth chapter he encouraged them to be expecting the coming of Christ. The Thessalonian church was experiencing severe persecution and had lost some of its members to martyrdom, [1 Thess. 2:14]. Apparently, this persecution was interpreted by some as the fulfillment of "great tribulation" Jesus mentioned in the Olivet Discourse. Since Paul had instructed them to be watching for the "Day of the Lord," many of them mistakenly thought the tribulation was nearly over, and Christ was about to return momentarily. This unfounded excitement caused Paul to write again to these dear saints, correcting their misconception, and encouraging them to await the signs Jesus gave in His Olivet Discourse.

*2 Thessalonians 1 4 So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: 5 Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer: 6 Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; 7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, **WHEN the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,** 8 **In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God,** and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; 10 **WHEN he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe** because our testimony among you was believed in that day. (KJV)*

Notice first of all, believers will rest from persecution when Jesus is revealed from heaven in judgment, [1:7]. Since this coming in judgment is post-tribulational, the rapture must also be post-tribulational.



There is only one logical interpretation of this passage regarding the timing of the rapture. No one will deny this coming is "post-tribulational." No pre-tribulationist believes Jesus will come in flaming fire, bringing vengeance on the ungodly, before the tribulation! However, many passages speak of Christ's coming in judgment after the tribulation. This passage makes it perfectly clear that Christians will "rest" from their tribulations at that time. Paul was in effect telling them when their ordeal would end, at the post-tribulation coming of Christ in judgment. In a pre-tribulation rapture scenario, Christians would have already been resting for seven years before this event, making Paul's statement dubious and illogical. Paul was trying to comfort the Thessalonian Christians in their persecutions. Yet, his encouragement was not centered around an alleged "any moment" pre-tribulation rapture, whereby they might expect immediate relief, but looked forward to the appearing of Christ in glory. By connecting their relief from persecution with the post-tribulational coming of Christ, Paul effectively placed the rapture after the tribulation. Notice also, that he connected their seeing Christ and admiring Him for the first time with the same coming in judgment, [2 Thess. 1:10].

**Antichrist Comes First**

**2 Thessalonians 2:1-4** Tim Warner - Revised 1/2003

In 2 Thessalonians 2, Paul directly addressed the problem that precipitated his Epistle. Some believers had been told their relief from persecution was imminent, and that Jesus was about to return momentarily. This error was dealt with decisively by Paul.

*2 Thessalonians 2:1-4 1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by **the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,** 2 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. 3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for **that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;** 4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. (KJV)*

This passage is very clear to the casual reader, and needs very little comment if we just take it at face value. But, because it is so devastating to the pre-trib view, much has been written to explain it away. Therefore, to do it justice, we will need to take it a verse at a time in some detail.

**Verse 1 - The Topic of Discussion** *1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by **the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,***

Paul's topic of discussion was the "coming" of Jesus and "our gathering together unto Him." It is necessary to establish whether Paul was **distinguishing** or **connecting** the "coming" of Jesus and "our gathering together" to Him. Some pre-tribulationists claim that Paul was introducing two separate topics, the rapture (our gathering together) and the second coming (the coming) as separate events. This question is easily resolved from the Greek text. When two nouns of the same case are connected by "and" (kai), if the first noun has the article (the) and the second noun does not, the two nouns are being connected, being viewed as a unit. If both nouns have the article (the), they are being distinguished — viewed as being distinct or contrasted.<sup>1</sup> The words in question are as follows:

thV	parousiaV	tou	kuriou	hmwn	Ihsou	Cristou	kai	hmwn	episunagwghV	ep	auton
the	coming	the	Lord	our	Jesus	Christ	and	our	gathering-together	to	Him

As you can see, "the coming" has the definite article (the). The second noun "gathering together" does not have the article. Therefore, both the "coming" and "gathering together" are seen as united. In this case, the second noun (gathering together) is a component part of the

first noun (coming), as demonstrated clearly in Matt. 24:29-31. If Paul meant to distinguish them as occurring at different times, he would have also used the definite article with "gathering together," as follows:

**thV parousiaV** tou kuriou hmwn Ihsou Cristou **kai tou episunagwghV** hmwn ep auton  
**the coming** the Lord our Jesus Christ **and the gathering-together** of-us to Him

Since both nouns point to a single composite event, we can be certain that Paul's topic was the coming of Jesus **for His people.**<sup>2</sup> In essence, Paul was saying, "*Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, more specifically, our gathering together unto Him...*" That is, the clause "*the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*" refers to the whole event, as Paul had just described it to the Thessalonians in the previous chapter, including the destruction of the wicked (2 Thess. 1:7-10). But, since in chapter 2 Paul wished to get more specific, and deal with the problem at hand — the over enthusiasm of some who thought the rapture was imminent — he narrowed the discussion to focus exclusively on the gathering of Jesus' elect.

The second observation we should make is Paul's choice of words. "Gathering together" is a term the Thessalonians were very familiar with from the Olivet Discourse. This is a compound word used only a few times in Scripture. It is the noun form of the verb "epi-sunago." This compound verb is found in Matt. 24:31, Mark 13:27, Luke 17:37, all in reference to Jesus' gathering His elect "*immediately after the tribulation*" (cf. Matt. 24:29-31). In Matthew 24, Jesus said He would dispatch His angels to "*gather together His elect.*" Here, Paul referred to "*our gathering together unto Him*" using the noun form of the same word. While all words and phrases should be interpreted by their contexts, the similar phrases certainly carry considerable weight, particularly since this is a rare expression in the Greek New Testament. Coupled with "*the coming*" (parousia) of Jesus Christ in both passages, "*gathering together*" can only mean one thing. Every occurrence of "epi-sunago" in the context of Christ's coming always refers to His post-trib coming (Matt. 24:31, Mark 13:27, Luke 17:37). Therefore, there is every reason to believe that the Thessalonians would connect this "*coming*" (parousia) and "*gathering together*" with the "*coming*" (parousia) and "*gather together*" of Jesus' elect in Matt. 24:29-31. This is even more probable because Paul had just told them a few verses before that they could expect relief from persecution at Christ's (post-trib) coming to destroy their persecutors (see [previous article on 2 Thess. 1](#)).

In summary, verse 1 flows from the discussion in the previous chapter. It narrows the discussion from the whole complex event known as the "parousia" of Jesus Christ, zeroing in on the matter of most concern to the Thessalonians — "*our gathering together unto Him.*"

**Verse 2 - The Problem** *2 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.*

What did Paul mean by soon (quickly) "*shaken in mind*" and "*troubled*?" The Greek word "*shaken*" means "*waver, agitate, rock, or topple.*" It is the opposite of firmness or steadfastness. Since Paul wrote "*soon shaken in mind,*" he most likely meant to be quickly or easily moved or shaken from sound doctrine concerning their expectancy of Christ's coming. The Greek word for "*troubled*" means "*to cry out*" and implies being anxious. Paul did not want his readers to be quickly or easily shaken in their minds from the proper kind of expectancy regarding Christ's coming. Their thinking that Christ's coming was about to occur, when in fact it was not, could easily shake them from their composure and firm footing.

Paul mentioned three things that might have caused their wrong expectation: spirit, word, or forged Epistle. "Spirit" most likely referred to some kind of alleged word from the Lord in a false prophecy circulating among them. "Word" no doubt means oral false teaching. "Letter as from us" refers to a counterfeit Epistle, allegedly from Paul. In 2 Thess. 3:17-18, Paul reminded them of his unique way of signing his Epistles, so they would know it was really from him. (See our article [The Pauline Authorship of Hebrews](#) for an in-depth discussion of the Pauline signature).

**The Textual Variant** This verse is problematic for two reasons, both related to variant readings in our English Versions. The majority of Greek manuscripts (and KJV/NKJV) read "*the day of Christ.*" But, a small number of early manuscripts (and most modern versions) have "*the day of the Lord.*" From a post-trib perspective, either reading is acceptable because post-tribbers view the "*day of Christ*" and the "*day of the Lord*" as being the same post-trib coming. However, pre-tribbers have a serious problem either way.

If "*the day of Christ*" is the correct reading, every other occurrence of "*day of Christ*" in the New Testament refers to our hope - the rapture (cf. Phil. 1:10, Phil. 2:16). Once again, this is consistent with verse one which speaks of "*our gathering together unto Him*" as the topic of discussion. Yet, as we shall see, the next verse plainly says that this day (our gathering together to Him - the Day of Christ) cannot come until after the Antichrist is revealed. Therefore, if "*the day of Christ*" is the correct reading, this passage plainly puts the rapture after the revelation of Antichrist, and makes the pre-trib idea of "imminence" utterly impossible. "*Day of Christ*" is consistent with the post-trib scenario, and very problematic for the pre-trib scenario.

If the minority reading, "*the day of the Lord,*" is what Paul wrote, pre-tribbers are faced with the fact that this term is consistently used of Christ's post-trib coming. (See our article [The Day of the Lord Cannot Include the Tribulation.](#)) Paul gave the Thessalonian believers instructions regarding **their watching for the "Day of the Lord"** in 1 Thess. 5, implying that it is the day for which Christians wait. Peter and Joel wrote that it occurs after the cosmic signs Jesus placed "*immediately after the tribulation*" (cf. Matt. 24:29-31 & Acts 2:20), making it entirely post-tribulational. Yet, here, Paul plainly connected the "*Day of the Lord*" with "*our gathering together unto Him*" (assuming this variant reading). Pre-tribbers have the same problem here as they have in 1 Thess. 5. The rapture is connected with a clear post-trib event - the Day of the Lord which occurs after the cosmic signs mentioned in Matt. 24:29-31.

Typically, modern pre-tribbers assume that the "*Day of the Lord*" includes the entire tribulation. They do not take the term "day" literally, but stretch it out to include the entire seven years of the tribulation, encompassing the alleged pre-trib rapture, the entire tribulation, and the post-trib coming. This eases the problem for them in both 1 Thess. 5 and in this passage. However, the timing of the cosmic signs, being after the tribulation (Matt. 24:29) and before the Day of the Lord (Acts 2:20), renders this idea impossible. No matter which variant reading pre-tribbers adopt, this passage undermines their view of the rapture occurring at a different time than the second coming, and utterly demolishes the concept that the rapture is now imminent.

**The Translation — "is at hand" or "has come"** The second problem in verse two is the proper translation of the word enesthken. The KJV and NKJV translate it "*is at hand*" (implying imminence or immediacy). Most modern versions read "*has come*" implying a past event. The Greek word can either mean "*is present,*" or "*is at hand,*" [imminent or immediate]. A.T. Robertson, one of the most respected

Greek scholars, wrote the following about this Greek word and its use in this verse. "In 1Th 4:13-5:3 Paul had plainly said that Jesus would come as a thief in the night and had shown that the dead would not be left out in the rapture. But evidently some one claimed to have a private epistle from Paul which supported the view that Jesus was coming at once, {as that the day of the Lord is now present} (hōs hoti enestēken hē hēmera tou kuriou). Perfect active indicative of [enistēmi], old verb, to place in, but intransitive in this tense to stand in or at or near. So "is imminent" (Lightfoot). The verb is common in the papyri."<sup>3</sup> (bold & underline mine)

As usual, Robertson quoted from the English Revised Version (ERV 1881) which he favored over the KJV. Yet, his analysis of the Greek actually agrees with the KJV against the ERV (and most modern versions).

Another highly regarded Baptist Greek scholar, John Gill, wrote: "as that the day of Christ is at hand; or is at this instant just now coming on; as if it would be within that year, in some certain month, and on some certain day in it; which notion the apostle would have them by no means give into, for these reasons, because should Christ not come, as there was no reason to believe he would in so short a time, they would be tempted to disbelieve his coming at all, at least be very indifferent about it; and since if it did not prove true, they might be led to conclude there was nothing true in the Christian doctrine and religion."<sup>4</sup>

Pre-tribbers sometimes appeal to the fact that Paul used the perfect tense here, which implies a completed action. On that basis they claim the Thessalonians did not think the rapture was imminent, but rather thought that the "Day of the Lord" (which they wrongly define as the tribulation) had already come. In other words, they thought they were already in the tribulation. However, according to Thayer's Greek lexicon, the Greek word "enesthken," translated "at hand," means "to place in or among, to put in, to be upon, to impend, to threaten, to be close at hand, to be present." Using the perfect tense form would indicate the Thessalonians thought that the coming of Christ had just become "imminent" or "at hand." In other words, the new false teaching indicated that whatever had been delaying Christ's return for them no longer hindered His coming, and He could be expected to appear almost immediately, or momentarily. The perfect tense (indicating completed action) was related to the new belief on their part. The Thessalonians had wrongly been persuaded (because of a false prophecy, false teaching, or false Pauline Epistle), that some current events (probably their persecution) had fulfilled the signs of Jesus' coming, and that Jesus could be expected to come for them momentarily. The ASV captures this meaning rather well. "to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by epistle as from us, as that the day of the Lord is just at hand".

In summary, verse 2 indicates the problem Paul was addressing. The Thessalonians wrongly believed some false prophecy, teaching or counterfeit epistle, indicating that the Day of Christ's coming for them had just become imminent (or at hand), and that Jesus was coming momentarily. This new teaching caused great excitement, agitation, and controversy in the Thessalonian church.

**Verse 3 - The Solution** *3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;*

It is significant that just before setting these believers straight, Paul echoed Jesus' words at the beginning of His Olivet Discourse. In Jesus' reply to the disciples' question, "When shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of Your coming and the end of the age," Jesus replied, "Take heed that no man deceive you." Jesus followed this with a series of signs that must all occur before His coming. In this passage, Paul began to correct the error of the Thessalonians with precisely the same instruction. Paul wrote, "let no man deceive you by any means," and then reminded them of the same signs Jesus placed before His coming and gathering together His elect. Paul went on to say that certain things must come before the "Day of Christ," and "our gathering together unto Him." He was plainly indicating that the rapture is **not yet imminent**. Why? Because the things Jesus prophesied, that must come before Jesus would dispatch His angels to gather together His elect (Matt. 24:29-31), had not yet occurred. There is no question that Paul was referring his readers back to the Olivet Discourse. The two things Paul said must come before the "Day of Christ" and our being gathered to Christ are two of the highlights of Jesus' Olivet Discourse.

PAUL - 2 things that precede the rapture	JESUS - 2 things that precede the 2nd coming
<p>"That day shall not come unless there come <u>a falling away first</u>..."</p>	<p>"Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations on account of My name. And at that time many <u>will fall away</u> and will deliver up one another and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise, and will mislead many. And because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end, he shall be saved." [Matt. 24. 9-13 (NASB)]</p>
<p>"...and the Man of Sin be revealed, the son of perdition... who <u>sitteth in the Temple of God</u>, showing himself that he is God."</p>	<p>"When ye therefore shall see <u>the abomination of desolation</u>, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, <u>stand in the holy place</u>, (whoso readeth, let him understand):" [Matt. 24:15]</p>

The evidence is overwhelming that Paul was alluding to the Olivet Discourse. He corrected the error, that the Day of Christ was upon them, and that the rapture could be expected at any moment, by referring them to the very things Jesus said would precede His coming after the tribulation. Again, we see a pattern of Paul's conformity to the Olivet Discourse rather than teaching a pre-trib rapture in contrast to Christ's teaching. This statement by Paul is clear and direct. The Thessalonians should not be deceived by false prophecy, false teaching, or false Epistles, that Christ's coming to gather His elect to Himself had become imminent. This cannot occur until **after** the "falling away," and the "Man of Sin is revealed." Therefore, the rapture cannot be imminent until after the signs occur that Jesus gave to His disciples in the Olivet Discourse. Paul resolved the problem in the Thessalonian church by appealing to the Olivet Discourse. In the table below, note the clear reliance of Paul on Jesus' teaching, highlighted through color coding of the same ideas.

<p>Matt 24:4,9-15,21,29-31 4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, <b>Take heed that no man</b></p>	<p>II Thess 2:1-4</p>
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*deceive you. (KJV) ...*

9 "Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations on account of My name.

10 "And at that time **many will fall away** and will deliver up one another and hate one another.

11 "And many false prophets will arise, and will mislead many.

12 "And because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold.

13 "But the one who endures to the end, he shall be saved.

14 "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come.

15 "Therefore when you see **the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place** (let the reader understand),...

21 for then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall.

...

29 "But **immediately after the tribulation** of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken,

30 and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and **they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory.**

31 "And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and **they will gather together His elect** from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

(NASB)

1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by **the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,**

2 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.

3 **Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;**

4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that **he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.**

(KJV)

In summary, there is perfect agreement between Jesus and Paul regarding the rapture. And, that agreement shows only a post-trib gathering of Jesus' elect.

**Verse 4 - The Revelation of the Man of Sin** 4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

In verse 3, Paul warned the Thessalonians not to let anyone deceive them that Christ's coming for them was imminent. While the "falling away" or "apostasy" might be a difficult sign for Christians to recognize because it would not be a single event in one location, the revealing of the Man of Sin was something hard to miss. Jesus spoke of the "abomination of desolation" standing in the holy place, and referred back to Daniel's prophecy (Matt. 24:15). Daniel prophesied that the Antichrist would enter the Temple with his forces, and place an object in the Holy Place (Dan. 11:31). Mark's account of the Olivet Discourse also implies an inanimate object being set up in the Holy Place (Mark 13:14). This could refer to the "image of the Beast" in Revelation. Or perhaps, it could refer to a throne on which the Antichrist will sit. Either way, there is no doubt that Daniel, Jesus, and Paul spoke of the same event. And we know both from Dan. 9:27 and Dan. 12:11 that this event will occur 3.5 years before the second coming, or in the middle of the 7 years (70th week). This is another problem for pre-tribbers, because the very sign that Paul placed before Jesus' coming for us actually occurs 3.5 years after the tribulation begins in their scenario! It is also further evidence that Paul was relying on Jesus' teaching in this passage.

In summary, the coming of Christ for His people is not yet imminent. It cannot be considered imminent until after certain signs occur. One of these signs will be easily recognized, when the Man of Sin takes his place in the Temple in Jerusalem claiming to be God and demanding worship. Until that occurs, it is wrong to suppose that Jesus might come momentarily, or that His coming is imminent. And those who insist that His coming is imminent, whether by an alleged prophecy, a teaching, or a forged document, are to be ignored. Do not allow them to deceive you.

### Conclusion

The pre-trib scenario is completely overthrown by this passage. Even if we allowed the variant "Day of the Lord" rather than "Day of Christ," and if we allowed their wrong definition of the term "Day of the Lord" as referring to the entire tribulation, the passage still makes no sense in a pre-trib scenario. If the Thessalonians had previously been taught to expect a pre-trib rapture, and if they had been deceived into thinking the tribulation had begun and they were still here, how do you suppose a pre-trib Paul would have responded? The obvious answer is he would remind them that the rapture is pre-trib, and they cannot possibly be in the tribulation because "our gathering together unto Him" is BEFORE the tribulation! Telling them that the Apostasy and revelation of the Man of Sin must come first does not resolve the problem in the least, but actually makes it much worse! In effect, it says that the Antichrist will be revealed before the tribulation (and allegedly the rapture). How then could the pre-trib rapture be "imminent" as pre-tribbers claim? Or, if pre-tribbers attempt to dodge the problem by saying that the revelation of Antichrist is before the tribulation, but the rapture is even before that, then Paul did not resolve the problem at all! Why would telling them that the Antichrist must come before the tribulation even matter to them, if it was a supposed pre-trib rapture that they had missed? Also, putting Antichrist's revelation before the 70th week contradicts Paul who put in it the middle of the 70th week, connecting his revelation to the abomination of desolation (see vs. 4)! The fact is, the pre-trib scenario simply won't work in this passage no matter how much one tries to force it.

As we have seen by the side by side comparison, this passage flows easily and naturally from both Jesus' Olivet Discourse, and also from Paul's statements in the previous chapter. It agrees in substance and sequence with Jesus. The Thessalonians had been instructed previously about Jesus' coming from the Olivet Discourse. This discourse lists a series of signs that must come before Jesus comes to gather together His elect after the tribulation. There was a false teaching circulating among the Thessalonians, which had originated in either a false prophecy, false teaching, or false Epistle, that Jesus' coming for them had just become imminent or momentarily. The post-trib Paul corrects the problem by referring them back to Jesus' Olivet Discourse, reminding them of the two major signs Jesus gave: the apostasy and the abomination of desolation. In chapter one, Paul taught the Thessalonians, who were suffering great persecution, that they could expect relief when Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire, with his army of angels, to destroy their persecutors. Paul went on in chapter 2 to remind them to wait for the signs Jesus gave in His Olivet Discourse. (For a discussion of the Restrainer in verses 6-9, see our article, [The Restrainer](#)).

Go to: "[The Blessed Hope](#)"

[1] Granville Sharp's **sixth rule** reads as follows: "*And as the insertion of the copulative kai between nouns of the same case, without articles, (according to the fifth rule,) denotes that the second noun expresses a different person, thing, or quality, from the preceding noun, so, likewise, the same effect attends the copulative when each of the nouns are preceded by articles, as in the following examples - (John 1:17, John 2:22, John 11:44, Col. 2:2, 2 Tim. 1:5, 1 Pet. 4:11).*" [Remarks on the uses of the Definite Article in the Greek Text of the New Testament;

Granville

Sharp,

1778]

Essentially, the first rule deals with the TSKS (article-substantive-kai-substantive) which views the nouns together as a unit. The sixth rule concerns the TSKTS (article-substantive-kai-article substantive) construction and indicates that a distinction is being drawn between the two nouns. For more information on Sharp's six rules, [click here](#).

[2] F.F. Bruce draws the same conclusion from the Greek syntax in his commentary on [1 & 2 Thessalonians](#) (p. 163). However, Daniel Wallace (pre-tribulationist Greek scholar) writes, "*Since the TSKS construction involves impersonal substantives, the highest degree of doubt is cast upon the probability of the terms referring to the same event.*" [Wallace, [Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics](#), p. 290]. But, Wallace himself, on pages 286-289 proved with several examples that impersonal TSKS constructions are meant to unite two substantives in a single unit. Wallace lists 5 types of impersonal TSKS constructions and their significance: "*a) distinct entities, though united, b) overlapping entities, c) first entity subset of second, d) second group subset of first, e) both entities identical.*" (pp. 286-288). Impersonal nouns in a Sharp TSKS construction rarely mean that the two nouns are synonymous things. The "parousia" (coming of Christ) is NOT the same thing as "*our gathering together unto him.*" The Sharp TSKS construction with impersonal nouns does not frequently identify the two nouns as being absolutely synonyms ("e" in Wallace's list of types of impersonal TSKS). Rather, it usually implies that they are being viewed together as a unit for a specific reason within the context. In fact, Wallace demonstrates with several examples that a TSKS construction with impersonal nouns frequently indicates that one noun is a subset of the other. In other words, while the nouns are not identical things, one noun is a component part of the other. It is obvious from Matt. 24:29-31 that the "parousia" is not identical with the "gathering" of Jesus' elect. The former involves Christ Himself, while the latter involves believers. Yet, it is clear from Matt. 24:29-31 that the "gathering together" of the elect is a component part of the "parousia" of Christ. The "parousia" (coming) mentioned repeatedly in the context (vss. 3, 27, 37, 39) is the event described in verse 30, when all the tribes of the earth will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Yet, during this "coming" (parousia) Jesus will send His angels to "gather together" His elect (v. 31). Therefore, while the two substantives themselves do not have identical meanings, the "gathering together" is clearly a component part or subset of the "parousia." The term "parousia" of Christ represents the whole complex "coming" including all of its component parts mentioned in Matt. 24:29-31. The "gathering together" of the elect is simply one component part of the "parousia." Consequently, when Paul referred to "*the parousia and gathering-together*" using the TSKS construction he intended to view these two things as a unit, exactly as in Matt. 24:29-31. Based on the known precedent in the Olivet Discourse, the TSKS impersonal construction in 2 Thess. 2:1 indicates that Paul meant the following: "*Concerning the parousia (coming) of our Lord Jesus Christ, and more specifically our gathering together unto Him...*" In any case, Wallace himself asserts that regardless of whether impersonal, plural, or personal substantives are used, the TSKS construction always intends to show some kind of unity.

### The Blessed Hope

**Titus 2:13** Tim Warner - Revised 2/2002

*Titus 2:13 13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; (KJV)*

This verse is so simple, yet so profound. It has strong implications regarding the timing of the rapture. In the KJV, it seems to imply that the "blessed hope" and the "glorious appearing" might be separate events. But, in the Greek text, it is quite clear that this is not the case. The "glorious appearing" is what we as Christians are awaiting. The KJV is technically correct here, by translating the word "and" [Greek - **kai**]. But, it does not account for the "Granville Sharp rule," which applies to this verse.

Those who read the previous article will already be familiar with the Granville Sharp rule. The Greek word **kai** (kai) is equivalent to our English word "and" or "also." It is often used to connect two nouns in some way. It sometimes means the second noun is *in addition to* the first noun, distinguishing the two nouns. That is, two unrelated things are mentioned together. Example, "heaven **and** earth." But, under certain circumstances, "kai" is used to restate, or connect two nouns together, as referring to the same person or thing, or two things being joined together as a unit. (Example, "the God **and** Father.") That is, the second noun is a further description of the first noun. Both nouns refer to the same thing or person. Or, in the case of impersonal nouns, indicating that one noun is a subset of the other.

The basic Granville-Sharp rule is as follows;

*"If two nouns of the same case are connected by a "kai" [and] and the article is used with both nouns, they refer to different persons or things. [Sharp's rule VI] If only the first noun has the article, the second noun refers to the same person or thing referred to in the first."*<sup>1</sup>

The key to understanding this rule is the use of the definite article (the). When we have two nouns connected by "kai" (and), we must look to see if the definite article (the) is used before BOTH nouns, or just the first noun. If it is used before BOTH nouns, Sharp's rule VI applies, and the two nouns are referring to separate things or persons being distinguished or contrasted. But, if only the first noun has the definite article, Sharp's rule I applies. Both nouns refer to the same person (in the case of personal nouns) or two things are joined in some

kind of unit (with impersonal nouns).<sup>2</sup> Now, let's apply this rule to Titus 2:13. Here is the Greek text followed by a word for word translation.

prosdeco	mak	e	epifa	d	me	Q	swt	h	C	I						
menoi	<u>hn</u>	arian	lpida	<u>ai</u>	neian	hV	oxhV	<u>ou</u>	galou	eou	<u>ai</u>	hroV	mwn	ristou	hsou	
Looking	blesse	h	appe	gl	gre	G	Sav	o	C	J						
for	<u>he</u>	d	ope	<u>nd</u>	aring	he	ory	<u>he</u>	at	od	<u>nd</u>	ior	f	us	hrist	esus

Granville Sharp's rule I actually applies twice in this verse. It applies to the words "the great God and Savior." Both "great God" and "Savior" are nouns of the same case. The first noun "great God" has the definite article "the" and the second noun does not. This means that the Greek word "kai" [and] is being used to restate, and the second noun is referring to the same person as the first noun. So, in effect, "savior" (who is Jesus Christ) **IS** "the great God." This is a definitive statement on the deity of Christ which is lost if Granville Sharp is not applied.

The same rule applies to the first sentence, although in this case the nouns are impersonal things. Both "blessed hope" and "appearing" are nouns of the same case. And, the first noun (blessed hope) has the definite article, while the second noun (appearing) does not. With impersonal nouns, this indicates the "appearing" and "blessed hope" are being referred to as a unit. In an impersonal Sharp rule I construction, the relationship between the two nouns is either, a. distinct things being joined together as a unit, b. the first noun is a subset of the second, c. the second noun is a subset of the first, e. the two nouns are identical. In any case, with this construction, some kind of unity is being stressed between the two nouns.<sup>3</sup> The NIV captures the meaning best in this verse. "while we wait for the blessed hope - the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ." So, in essence, this verse says that the "blessed hope" for which we are looking is (or at least included within) the "glorious appearing" of Christ. This begs the question, what is the "glorious appearing?"

*Matt 16:27 27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. (KJV)*

*Matt 24:29-31 29 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: 30 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**. 31 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. (KJV)*

*Mark 8:38 38 Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, **when he cometh in the glory of his Father** with the holy angels. (KJV)*

The "glorious appearing" is when Christ comes in all His power and glory, being manifest to all the world. So, in effect, Titus 2:13 tells us that our we are watching for Christ's coming in power and glory, which is after the tribulation. This strongly implies that the rapture is after the tribulation.

[1] Vaughn and Gideon, A Greek Grammar of the New Testament, (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1979), p. 83.

[2] The Granville Sharp rule indicates that the two nouns are referring to the same **person** when personal singular nouns are found in the TSKS (Sharp) construction. When impersonal nouns are used, it implies one of the following:

- a) the two nouns are being viewed together as a unit.
- b) the two nouns are overlapping entities
- c) the first noun is a subset of the second
- d) the second noun is a subset of the first
- e) the nouns are identical (synonomous)

Wallace, Greek Grammar, Beyond the Basics, pp. 286-288

In any case, the TSKS construction always implies unity, while the TSKTS construction always implies distinction or separation. For more on Sharp's Rule, [click here](#).

### **The Rapture in Revelation**

**Revelation 14:14-20** Tim Warner - 01/1998

One of the glaring weaknesses of the pre-trib rapture view, is that the book of Revelation does not place any coming of Jesus Christ before the tribulation. The Olivet Discourse gave us the sequence of events leading up to the end of the age. In that passage, no rapture before the tribulation was suggested. There is only the gathering of the elect "immediately after the tribulation." [Matt. 24:29-31]. Pre-tribbers are forced to speculate where their alleged "rapture" fits into the whole scheme. The book of Revelation presents similar problems, moving from the seven letters to the churches, to the tribulation scenes, without mentioning any coming of Christ at all. Many pre-tribbers use allegorical interpretation in order to fabricate a pre-trib rapture, claiming that John's being caught up to heaven to see the future "represents" the Church being raptured. I am not going to deal with this type of argument in this article. [[Click here](#) to read "The Phantom Rapture in Revelation Four," for a discussion of the "John represents the Church" argument.]

Not all pre-tribbers believe John's being caught up to heaven represents the rapture. They recognize that this kind of fanciful - allegorical interpretation is not valid. However, they are still left with the glaring problem of no rapture before the tribulation. Some excuse this by claiming the rapture is not the focus of the book. But, Revelation is addressed to the seven **churches** in Asia, and it exhorts them to remain faithful **until Jesus comes for them**. Jesus was speaking to the churches in all of the following verses. In each case he was speaking of His coming **for them**.

*Revelation 2 25 But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.*

*Revelation 3 3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.*

*Revelation 3 11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.*

*Revelation 22 7 Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.*

*Revelation 22 12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.*

*Revelation 22 20 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*

In Christ's exhortations to the churches He mentioned the rapture at least six times in the above verses. In my judgment, this proves that **the coming of Christ for His Church** is indeed a crucial issue in Revelation. Pre-tribulationists are simply overlooking the obvious, that the rapture occurs in conjunction with Christ's coming at the battle of Armageddon. And, this is exactly the picture Revelation paints.

Revelation gives only one description of the rapture. It is described in terms of a harvest. Christ is seen on a cloud harvesting the earth. The symbolism of a harvest was a common way of describing the rapture known to believers in the first century. Jesus' parable of the wheat and tares shows that both would grow until the time of "harvest" when the angels would separate the two at Christ's command. James 5:7,8 also describes the rapture in terms of a harvest, applying Jesus' parable to the Church.

*James 5:7-8 7 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. 8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. (KJV)*

Here we see the delay leading up to the rapture compared to the farmer awaiting the time of harvest. When the rainy season comes, he knows that the time of harvest has arrived. In the same way James exhorts us to be patient and wait for the rapture.

Revelation 14:14-20 vividly describes this harvest of the elect, followed immediately by the battle of Armageddon.

*Rev 14:14-16 14 And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. 15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. 16 And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. (KJV)*

This is the rapture of the Church that James instructed us to be patiently awaiting. The same scene is found in Matthew 24:29-31. This is the Son of Man coming on the clouds, harvesting His elect. Immediately following, the wicked are harvested by the angel and thrown into the winepress where Christ destroys them. Revelation fourteen, like Luke 17:24-37, ties together the rapture with the battle of Armageddon.

*Rev 14:18-20 18 And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. 19 And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. 20 And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs. (KJV)*

Comparing Scripture with Scripture is a fundamental technique of good Bible study. This is especially apparent in Revelation where allusions to Old Testament prophecy abound. Comparing parallel passages helps us collate Revelation with previous prophecy.

Revelation fourteen is an important passage because it brings together several elements from other parallel passages. I believe there can be no doubt that Revelation 14:17-20 is drawn directly from Joel 3:12-16. Compare these two passages for yourself. Joel adds something very important to this event. First, he included the cosmic sign, the darkening of the sun and moon. And, he called this the **"Day of the Lord."** The parallel **winepress** in Revelation 19:15 makes it all but certain that each of these passages refer to the battle of Armageddon. Yet, the sun and moon sign ties in the Olivet Discourse where Jesus spoke of these events as occurring *"immediately after the tribulation."* Jesus also spoke of the Son of Man coming on the clouds to harvest His elect, again paralleling Revelation 14:14-16.

The Day of the Lord...	Sun & Moon Darkened	Armies Gathered	Winepress of Wrath	Second Coming	Kingdom Follows
...In Joel 3	verse 15	verses 9-11	verse 13	verse 12,16	verse 7-21
...In Revelation 14	-	verse 18	verse 19	-	-
...In Revelation 19	-	verse 19	verse 15	verse 11	Chap. 20

The comparison of these three passages shows clearly that each are speaking of the same event, the second coming of Christ after the tribulation. So, the placement of the first harvest by the Son of Man, on the cloud, clearly reflects the idea that the rapture of the righteous occurs just before the battle of Armageddon.

The uniform teaching of Jesus, Peter, and Paul, the absence of a pre-trib rapture in Revelation, and Revelation's description of a dual harvest, makes a very compelling case for the post-trib position. These parallel passages also make a good case for the idea that Revelation is not entirely sequential from beginning to end. If the battle of Armageddon is found in chapters 14 and 19, Revelation, like Daniel, must contain a certain amount of recapitulation. [For further study of this concept, see the series of articles, "The Chronology of Revelation" found on the main page].

### **The First Resurrection**

**Revelation 20:1-6** Tim Warner - 01/1998

In Revelation 20, John described the resurrected saints being given places of authority in Christ's Kingdom.

*Revelation 20 4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: 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. 5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. **This is the first resurrection.** 6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. (KJV)*

The "first resurrection" which includes the tribulation martyrs is the only resurrection in the book of Revelation. Notice that John did not actually see the resurrection of the saints taking place, but described resurrected saints being given their places of authority in the Kingdom. It is clear that they had been previously resurrected. According to verse four, this resurrection includes those who were slain by the Antichrist. Therefore, they must have come through the tribulation, not bypassed it. This resurrection, which is clearly post-tribulational, was called by

John, the "first resurrection." He contrasted it with the resurrection of the ungodly after the millennium. Of those who will experience the "first resurrection" he said: "*Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.*" The implication is that all those who will reign with Christ will be raised in the "first resurrection." The fact that he called this the "first resurrection" precludes the possibility of there being a resurrection before this one at the beginning of the tribulation. By placing the "first resurrection" after the tribulation, John has also placed the rapture after the tribulation.

Many try to escape this obvious conclusion by claiming there are two stages to the "first resurrection" of the saints. The first stage being before the tribulation, and the second being after the tribulation, as described in Revelation twenty. But this interpretation is extremely strained and unnatural. If John meant this was the second stage of the "first resurrection" he would have said so, especially since there is no other resurrection mentioned in Revelation. For that matter, there is no resurrection before the tribulation anywhere in the Bible! The original readers of this epistle would have had no basis to draw such a conclusion. The natural, unforced, interpretation of Revelation twenty requires a post-tribulation resurrection of the Church of Jesus Christ.

This agrees with Paul's comments in 1 Cor. 15.

*1 Cor 15:22-23 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. 23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.* (NKJ)

Paul seems to say there is only a single future coming of Christ when ALL saints will be raised! No doubt Paul was referring to Jesus' plain teaching that all who belong to Him will be raised the same day.

*John 6:39,40,44,54 39 "This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. 40 "And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." ... 44 "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. ... 54 "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.* (NKJ)

*John 11:24 24 Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."* (NKJ)

Some pre-tribbers claim that this resurrection cannot occur at the rapture because it follows the second coming in chapter 19. However, this objection is based on misunderstanding the verb tenses that John used, and poor English translations.

John was NOT describing the "first resurrection" as taking place at that time. The English wording in most translations does not do a very good job of conveying the precise verb tenses found in the Greek text. In most cases in Revelation, John recorded what he saw in the order he saw it. But, in the case of the "first resurrection," the wording and tenses of the verbs in the Greek text suggests that the first resurrection was already past, and John was seeing the saints already ruling on thrones. The rest is his explanation of who these people are.

Notice that John did NOT say he saw the resurrection. He began by saying that he saw THRONES with people sitting on them. This was a Millennial scene he was describing. They are already reigning with Christ, INCLUDING the resurrected martyrs of the tribulation. John then went on to explain who these people are. The second occurrence of the words "*and I saw*" in verse 4 are NOT in the Greek text, but were added by the translators. They give the false impression that the martyrs were resurrected after the others. That is NOT what the Greek text says at all. Here is Young's Literal Translation.

*"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them, and the souls of those who have been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus, and because of the word of God, and who did not bow before the beast, nor his image, and did not receive the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand, and they did live and reign with Christ the thousand years;"*

Here is how the Greek text literally reads word for word: "*And (I) saw thrones and (they) sat upon them, and judgment had been given to them and the souls that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus...*"

The words "was given" (KJV) in verse 4 is the Greek word "edothē" (a form of "didomi" #1325). This verb tense points to an action that occurred in the past but has continuing results into the present. It is precisely the same verb used by Jesus in Matt. 28:18, where He said, "*all authority in heaven and earth has been given unto me.*" SO, John was not describing judgment being given to them. Rather, he was telling his readers that judgment had already been given to them prior to his seeing them on thrones.

Also, the verb "lived" in verse 4 does NOT mean raise up, or the act of being resurrected. It is "ezesan" a form of "zao" (life). In this tense, the verb means the state of living after having been raised. Here are three other verses that use precisely the same verb in the same tense.

*Luke 15:32 32 It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.* (KJV)

*Rev 2:8 8 And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;* (KJV)

*Rev 13:14 14 And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.* (KJV)

As you can see, in every case this verb means a state of living AFTER having been raised, not the act of being raised. We see then that judgment being given to them was something already accomplished, and their resurrection was already accomplished when John saw them reigning on thrones in Rev. 20. Now, let's translate this passage, leaving out the words that are not in the Greek text, and using the more precise verb tenses. I have put John's explanatory notes in parenthesis in order to mark off what John actually saw from his regressing to give explanations. The parenthetical portion is not a part of what he actually saw occurring in sequence.

*"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, (and judgment had been given unto them AND the souls 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 were living and reigning with Christ a thousand years. (But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished); (This is the first resurrection)."*

Note the switch from the present tense, where John was narrating what he saw, to his regressing in order to explain who these people are, (the bracketed portion). The reason he mentioned "souls" was NOT because he saw "souls," but to identify some of the ones reigning on thrones as the "souls" he had previously seen under the altar at the 5th seal.

Rev 6:9-11 9 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: 10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? 11 And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled. (KJV)

John was showing the final results of the martyr's "waiting" for a little season. He described one large group who were all sitting on thrones. Then he explained that some of these were the "souls" he had previously seen under the altar, who had later been given authority, and were at that time LIVING and REIGNING with Christ in His Kingdom. This is also the position of the Jamieson - Faussett - Brown Commentary which says of this verse, "From #Re 6:9, I infer that "souls" is here used in the strict sense of spirits disembodied when first seen by John." So, in the sequence of events that John was describing, the "first resurrection" had already taken place (presumably at the second coming). He was describing the aftermath of the resurrection, and what became of the souls he had previously seen under the altar, not the resurrection itself.

### Technical Terms

#### Associated with the Rapture Tim Warner - 7/2002

"Technical terms" are nouns or descriptive noun phrases that are understood by the intended audience to refer to specific things even without explanation within the context. For example, the word "rapture" in modern prophetic speech is understood to refer to the coming of Christ for His Church. We do not normally need to refer to the context in which the word "rapture" might be found in modern Christian books to find out what "rapture" means. We simply assume the writer is referring to the coming of Christ for His Church. The word "tribulation" is another word that has taken on a technical meaning in modern Evangelical jargon. However, in the Bible, "tribulation" alone is not a technical term, because it is frequently used of troubles in general and not merely THE "tribulation." When the Bible means to indicate THE "tribulation," the words "great tribulation" are used (cf. Rev. 7:14).

In English, we use the definite article (the) sometimes to distinguish between a technical term and a non-technical term. My usage of the word "tribulation" above demonstrates this. By my adding "THE" to tribulation, we understand a distinction between general "tribulation" and a specific "tribulation" known to us. However, this is not always the case in Greek.

What can make a term a technical term is its repeated (or frequent) reference to the same thing or event in Scripture. Also, a term that is not clearly explained in the context shows that the writer assumed his readers knew what it meant. There was therefore common knowledge of the term between writer and reader. Such terms are not hard to spot and identify. We can discern technical terms from Scripture by their LACK of explanations within the context (the writer ASSUMES that the hearer or reader would understand the term). Secondly, by the EXCLUSIVE (or nearly exclusive) usage of the term in reference to a single event.

We have excluded the word "tribulation" from being a technical term in Scripture because it is often used of tribulations in general, without referring to THE "tribulation." Therefore, we need to review the CONTEXT where this word is found in order to decide if it is referring to THE "tribulation" or to some other kind of "tribulation." Because of this, we cannot ASSUME that when "tribulation" alone is used it means THE "tribulation." We therefore cannot rightly use the following verses to prove that the rapture is post-trib.

John 16:33 33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. (KJV)

Acts 14:22 22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. (KJV)

However, the over-all usage of technical terms in contexts dealing with the second coming weigh heavily in favor of the post-trib position (and against all other rapture views including pre-wrath). These terms were understood by the first century believers to refer to a particular coming of the Lord without explanations in the context of it being pre- or post-trib. For example, *The Day of the Lord*, *The Day of Christ*, *The Day of Jesus Christ*, *The Day of the Lord Jesus*, *The Day of the Lord Jesus Christ*, *The Day of God*. These terms are used by Paul and others with the expectation that their readers knew that they referred to a specific single event. For example:

Phil 1:10 10 That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till **the day of Christ**; (KJV)

Phil 2:16 16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in **the day of Christ**, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain. (KJV)

Paul assumed his readers knew what "day" he was speaking about. He did not explain in either verse whether this day was the coming of Christ BEFORE or AFTER the tribulation. He assumed his readers knew that the "Day of Christ" was the day for which they were watching and waiting. Therefore, it is right to associate it with the rapture (but not necessarily a pre-trib rapture). However, in 2 Thess. 2:1-3, Paul indicated that the Antichrist must come BEFORE the "Day of Christ." So, IF "Day of Christ" was a technical term, it is a POST-TRIB technical term, and the above verses are referring to a post-trib rapture.

Paul used other variations on the name of Christ, when referring to His "Day," as the future time for which believers watch and wait.

1 Cor 1:8 8 Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in **the day of our Lord Jesus Christ**. (KJV)

2 Cor 1:14 14 As also ye have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in **the day of the Lord Jesus**. (KJV)

Phil 1:6 6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until **the day of Jesus Christ**: (KJV)

All of these terms are given without explanation. Logically, all refer to the same "day," because in each case this "day" seems to be the day on which believers had placed their hope, ie, Christ's coming for His Church.

Likewise, the term "Day of the Lord" is simply another variation on the name of Christ. It is His day (Luke 17:24). The term is used in several contexts, each time the writer expected his readers to understand the specific day to which he referred without giving any explanation (pre- or post-trib). This is very problematic for pre-tribbers, because, if the Apostles were pre-trib (and expected two future comings of Christ, they would need to indicate to their hearers or readers whether they were referring to a pre- or post-trib event. Also, the term "Day of the Lord" was used repeatedly in the Old Testament in reference to Christ's post-trib coming to set up His Kingdom (see: Isa. 13:1-13, Joel 3:9-

17, Zech. 14:1-6). And, it is clearly AFTER the tribulation (cf. Matt. 24:29 & Acts 2:20). Yet, in 1 Thess. 5:1,2, Paul used the term 'Day of the Lord' for the rapture.

Pre-tribbers have in the past (not so much anymore) tried to draw a distinction between the "Day of Christ" (pre-trib rapture) and the "Day of the Lord" (post-trib coming). However, as pointed out above, this distinction fails because we find the term "Day of Christ" placed AFTER the Antichrist (2 Thess. 2:1-3) and the term "Day of the Lord" referring to the day for which Christians watch (1 Thess. 5:1,2). Either the day for which Christians are watching is the post-trib event, or else these are not technical terms. But, if they are not, then the passages are utterly confusing, because the writer ASSUMED that his audience KNEW which day he meant. The pre-tribber is forced to the awkward conclusion that Paul sometimes used the terms "Day of Christ" and "Day of the Lord" indiscriminately to refer to BOTH the (alleged) pre-trib rapture and post-trib coming, and expected his audience to decipher which he meant with no clue in the context.

**The Elusive Search for a Biblical Pre-Trib Term for the Rapture** There is a conspicuous lack of a single technical term in the Bible for a pre-trib rapture (as distinct from the second coming). Pre-tribbers have frantically searched for one, but always come up short. Having failed the "Day of Christ/Day of the Lord" distinction, they have tried to draw a distinction between the "rapture" and "revelation" of Christ. Yet, when we test ANY kind of alleged technical term in Scripture, the Bible fails to produce a single consistent technical term that could be applied to a pre-trib rapture. Why? The obvious answer is the rapture is not distinct from the second coming, but is part of the same event! And the New Testament writers had no need to distinguish between two separate comings.

The modern word "rapture" is the word most often used as a technical term today by pre-tribbers. Their uniform use of this term demonstrates the absolute necessity of having SOME kind of technical term for the rapture if it is indeed a distinct event. But, this word is NOT a technical term in the Bible. The word "rapture" is from the Latin text, and is the word found in the following verse.

*1 Thess 4:17* 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be **caught up** (Greek - harpazo, Latin - rapiemur) together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. (KJV)

However, such a word CANNOT be a technical term for an alleged pre-trib rapture because;

a) it is a verb and not a noun in Scripture b) it is usually used of other things in Scripture besides the catching up of believers at Christ's coming (cf. Matt. 11:12, Matt. 12:29, Matt. 13:19, John 6:15, John 10:12,28,29, Acts 8:39, Acts 23:10, 2 Cor. 12:2,4, Jude 1:23, Rev. 12:5). Only once is it used in connection with Christ's coming.

Other proposed technical terms also fail to refer exclusively to a pre-trib event, but are also used in clearly post-trib contexts.

As pointed out already, pre-tribbers have tried to distinguish between "rapture" and "revelation." The word "rapture" fails the test for the above reasons. But, how does the term "revelation" stack up as being exclusively post-trib (to distinguish the post-trib coming from an alleged pre-trib coming)? If the pre-trib theory were true, we would expect that the term "revelation" would ONLY be used of the post-trib event (as opposed to the alleged pre-trib rapture), and NEVER of the day Christians anticipate. Yet, this is not the case.

There are three main Greek nouns used in Scripture for the coming of Christ.

1. parousia (Strong's #3952) simply means "coming" or physical "presence."
2. epiphaneia (Strong's #2015) means "appearing" or "brightness" with emphasis on His glory.
3. apokalupsis (Strong's #602) means "revelation" or "unveiling."

All of these are nouns used as technical terms in Scripture, while assuming that the reader understands the coming to which the words refer. However, the Scriptures use each of these terms for BOTH the Christians' hope AND the post-trib event. The obvious conclusion is they are the same event.

Jesus' COMING (Parousia) as our hope: 1 Cor. 15:23, 1 Thess. 2:19, 1 Thess. 4:15, 1 Thess. 5:23, 2 Thess. 2:1, James 5:7,8, 2 Pet. 3:4, 1 John 2:28 Jesus' COMING (Parousia) as the post-trib event: Matt. 24:3,27,39, 1 Thess. 3:13, 2 Thess. 2:8

Jesus' APPEARING (Epiphaneia) as our hope: 1 Tim. 6:14, II Tim. 4:1,8 Jesus' APPEARING (Epiphaneia) as the post-trib event: 2 Thess. 2:8, Titus 2:13

Jesus' REVELATION (Apokalupsis) as our hope: 1 Cor. 1:7, 1 Pet. 1:7,13, 1 Pet. 4:13 Jesus' REVELATION (Apokalupsis) as the post-trib event: 2 Thess. 1:7

The bottom line is this: Post-tribbers can rightly claim ALL of the following terms as technical terms referring to the one and only future coming of Christ: *Day of Christ, Day of Jesus Christ, Day of the Lord Jesus, Day of the Lord Jesus Christ, Day of the Lord, parousia (His coming), epiphaneia (His appearing), & apokalupsis (His revelation)*. Pre-tribbers are forced to abandon all of these as technical terms for the rapture (because they are used at least once in a clear post-trib context). Instead they wrongly use a verb (harpazo - "caught up") as a noun (rapture) in order to INVENT a non-biblical technical term for an alleged pre-trib coming that is supposed to be distinguished from the second coming (with absolutely no precedent in Biblical usage). That there is no Biblical term for an alleged pre-trib coming should give pre-tribbers considerable pause that they may be forcing the Scriptures to fit into their preconceived mold.

**Misuse of the Word "Church" as a Technical Term** A second abuse of biblical terminology by pre-tribbers is their false and misleading usage of the word "Church." Their usage is governed by the dispensational parameters they have erected. To a pre-tribber, the "Church" is strictly a technical term referring to Christians saved after Pentecost and prior to the tribulation. Believers prior to Pentecost were not part of the "Church" nor are those saved after the beginning of the tribulation. Hence, the term "Church age" (a non-biblical term) has been coined to delineate the parameters of the "Church" on earth. But, once again, the Scriptures transgress the pre-trib jargon. Or more accurately, pre-trib jargon transgresses the Scriptural precedents and norms of terminology.

Jesus gave instructions in Matthew 18:17 regarding Church discipline, within a book that pre-tribbers strenuously claim is not related to the Church, and was written prior to the Church being established in the dispensational scheme. Stephen, in his defense before the Sanhedrin in Acts 7:38, referred to the Jewish believers under Moses as "the Church in the wilderness." In Hebrews 2:12, Paul quoted Psalm 22:22, which speaks of the Old Testament Jews in worship, as "the Church." In most English Bibles, this Psalm is translated "congregation" rather than "Church." However, the quote was from the Greek version of the Old Testament used by the early Church called the Septuagint (LXX). The New Testament writers frequently quoted this version in their New Testament books, even many times where it reads differently from the Hebrew Text we have today. In the LXX, the Greek word for "Church" (ekklēsia) is found repeatedly in the Old Testament, usually referring to the people of God (Israel). Since the Apostles and the early Christians to whom they wrote used this version, and since this version uses "Church" (ekklēsia) for the Old Testament saints repeatedly, it is not likely that the early Christians had the same understanding

of this term that modern pre-tribbers have. Once again we find pre-tribbers being forced to use artificial technical terminology that is NOT in agreement with the biblical precedent and common usage. We don't let cults or Catholics get away with such subtle shell games with biblical words, why do we permit it by pre-tribbers? The simple fact is, the wrong usage of terminology by pre-tribbers, and artificial distinctions in their jargon, are glaring indicators of a system that is being forced on the Scriptures.

#### **The Dispensational Foundations of Pre-Tribulationism** Tim Warner - 10/2000

Pre-tribulationism is based on a system of interpretation called "dispensationalism." The word "dispensation" means to "dispense." The same Greek word is used in the New Testament for "stewardship." It carries the idea of a certain program or economy whereby God deals with mankind. (It does not directly refer to a period of time, as is commonly believed). Dispensationalists see a progression of economies, but are not unanimously agreed on how many, or how to divide them. The simplest form of dispensationalism recognizes at least three separate dispensations, the Old Covenant, the Church age, and the Millennium. Almost all Christians accept some form of dispensationalism, even though they may not call themselves "dispensationalists," (if we mean by the term that God has dealt with people under more than one "economy" or "arrangement."

Not all dispensationalists are pre-trib. Some are mid-trib, pre-wrath, and even post-trib. However, the distinguishing characteristic of pre-trib dispensationalists is their belief in a **dual purpose and dual plan of redemption** in which the "Church" is separate from all other saints, in redemption, purpose, and destiny. This "dual purpose" theory, and segregation of the saints, within dispensational theology is what lays the logical foundation for a pre-trib rapture.

Pre-tribulationists have primarily allowed the "dual purpose" dispensational foundation to carry the weight of pre-tribulationism, rather than developing the pre-trib view from exposition of passages related to eschatology (the study of end-times). In essence, the pre-trib view is the only logical outcome of a "dual program" theory for Israel and the Church.

The question is, does the Bible teach a "dual purpose," "dual program," and "dual people of God?" Is this element of modern dispensationalism really Biblical or even necessary? Or is there a more holistic plan of redemption with a single people of God, manifest in different ways in different dispensations?

While many of the elements of dispensationalism were clearly taught by the Early Church, including the restoration of national Israel and a Millennial Kingdom, they did not segregate saints into two camps, Israel and the Church, or hold to "dual programs" or "dual destinies." During the earliest days of Christianity, the Church was primarily Jewish. Outsiders considered Christianity just another sect within Judaism, like the Pharisees or Sadducees. Early Messianic Christians believed they were the true Israel, and unbelieving Jews had been cut off from Israel and the covenants of God because of their unbelief. This contributed to the friction between early believers and their Jewish brethren, with unbelieving Jews persecuting the Jewish Christians at every turn. As missionary activity branched out from Jerusalem and Antioch, many Gentiles believed the gospel and were brought into fellowship as equal members with the Jewish Church. The embracing of Gentiles also irritated the unbelieving Jews almost as much as the Christian claim that Jesus was the Messiah. So, what we find in the first century is a theology that sees a clear continuity between many of the Old Testament promises and the Church. This is especially true of the promise of the "New Covenant" with Israel [Jer. 31:31-34].

After decades of the infant Church's persecution at the instigation of the unbelieving Jews, Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans and the Jews scattered. Although the persecution continued from the Romans, the pressure was off of the Church from the Jewish end. Many Christians couldn't help feeling a little superior to unbelieving Jews. After all, God had avenged them and demonstrated the triumph of Christianity over rabbinic Judaism. Jesus had predicted this catastrophe, showing that He was indeed the Son of God. As the Church grew over the next few centuries, being predominantly Gentile, this attitude began to develop into anti-Semitism in many local churches. We find Christian writers of the second and third centuries showing glimmers of scorn for the Jews. The Jewish and early Christian doctrine, that Messiah would come to restore Israel, fulfilling His Old Testament promises of a golden age, began to lose popularity among Christians.

This attitude gave birth to a fourth century heresy defined in Augustine's massive work, "The City of God." His interpretation held that God was finished with Israel. They had been rejected forever because they rejected Christ. The prophecies of the Old Testament, regarding a Millennial Kingdom with Jerusalem as the capital of the whole world, were reinterpreted symbolically, representing the Catholic "kingdom" of the "Church" in the present age. This system is known as "Replacement Theology" because the Old Testament prophecies are interpreted allegorically, and applied to the Gentile Church. So, effectively, the Church has usurped Israel's place and promises. The allegorizing of the Millennium and applying these passages to the present age of the Church is called "A-millennialism." Augustine replaced the Jewish "carnal" interpretation of a physical kingdom with his "spiritual" enlightened interpretation. In Augustine's view, when Jesus returns, this world will be destroyed and Christians will then enjoy heaven forever, with the Jews confined to hell. This view invited the subsequent persecution of Jews by the Roman Catholic Church for hundreds of years. It also became the theological excuse for the holocaust.

After the Reformation, most Protestants simply made a few modifications to Replacement Theology / A-millennialism, but continued to hold to its basic premise. However, some Protestants began to question the Catholic dogma. As Christians returned to a more literal interpretation of the Bible, many also returned to the ancient (pre-millennial) Christian view of prophecy, and the relationship between Christians and Jews. In this revived pre-millennialism, Christians were again seen as "adopted" into Israel, and unbelieving Israel temporarily "blinded" and separated from God, but soon to be restored. This is "historic" pre-millennialism, what the early Church believed prior to St. Augustine. Of course, historic pre-millennialism sees only one future coming of Jesus Christ, both to rescue the Church, and destroy the Babylonian system and the Beast (post-trib).

Out of the movement toward historic pre-millennialism, a new view began to take shape in the early 1800's. John Darby, of the Plymouth Brethren, developed a totally new approach to pre-millennialism. Darby's dispensational pre-millennialism featured this "dual programs" theory, keeping the Church entirely distinct from other saints, with Israel being God's "earthly people," and the Church being God's "heavenly people." According to Darbyism, the "Church age" is a parenthetical period in God's dealings with Israel. Typically, Darbyists like to say that "God's prophetic clock has stopped during this dispensation. It will resume when the Church is removed at the rapture." At that time God's dealings with man will revert back to the Old Testament economy. To them, the "Church age" began on the day of Pentecost, and will conclude just before God again deals with Israel, bringing judgment upon them in Daniel's seventieth week. The logical outcome of a "dual program" type of dispensationalism, is a pre-trib rapture. **If the "Church," as a completely distinct entity separate from Israel and its covenants and promises, began after the sixty-ninth week of Daniel, the "Church" cannot enter the**

**seventieth week, because this is the time when God resumes His dealings with Israel, and begins the fulfillment of prophecy again relating to Israel. Therefore, a pre-tribulation rapture became a natural extension of Darby's theory, in order to provide the vehicle for the Church's exit just prior to God's dealing with national Israel again.**

While dispensationalism does indeed have a solid foundation, the "dual program" theory of Darbyism is its weakness, and will ultimately be its downfall. Many Christians have totally abandoned dispensationalism because of glaring problems, and the incompatibility of the "dual programs" theory with the teaching of Apostles in the New Testament. In leaving dispensationalism completely, many have moved to Covenant Theology, A-millennialism, and Replacement Theology, totally abandoning the Millennial hope, and the future of the nation of Israel.

Dispensational thought is now in a state of radical change from within. Many dispensationalists have begun to see the serious flaws in the "dual program" theory. In the following articles, we will develop what has recently been called "Progressive Dispensationalism." Although the term itself was not coined until the late 1980s, the main elements of Progressive Dispensationalism were held by the early Church. This is the form of dispensationalism that I believe is biblical and balanced. Actually, progressive dispensationalism works with any rapture position, as long as it is pre-millennial and holds to a futurist view of the 70th week of Daniel. It does not require a pre-trib rapture, as traditional dispensationalism does. (This author is post-trib). But, neither does it require that one jettison pre-tribulationism. There are many pre-tribbers who hold to progressive dispensationalism. However, in my opinion, it is best suited for a post-trib understanding of the rapture, and it fits quite nicely with the post-trib view of the Olivet Discourse.

One attractive effect of the emergence of progressive dispensationalism is that many who had previously abandoned dispensationalism and pre-millennialism altogether, because of the glaring flaws in that system, are coming back to dispensationalism and pre-millennialism because progressive dispensationalism solves these problems. Even some non-dispensationalists are leaving a-millennialism and Covenant Theology for this form of dispensationalism. It is my belief that progressive dispensationalism will eventually displace traditional dispensationalism.

Of course, there are those who resist this movement, thinking that any move away from the "dual program" theory undermines the pre-trib rapture doctrine, that has become a test of orthodoxy in many circles. The pre-trib detractors are spreading fear that progressive dispensationalism leads to an "anti-Israel" mentality, or even to A-millennialism. I assure you, these charges are not true. Progressive dispensationalism holds the Jewish people in highest regard, recognizing them as God's natural sons, while Gentile believers are adopted sons. Progressives see a future for national Israel, just as traditional dispensationalists do. Progressives are pre-millennial, and are in no danger of becoming A-millennialists.

While much has been written on this topic, the vast majority of pro-PD material has been geared toward the seminary student and scholar, leaving the average layman and even many pastors in the dark. The following articles in this section are designed to lay out the essentials of progressive dispensationalism for you to evaluate in layman's terms.

**PROGRESSIVE DISPENSATIONALISM 101** Tim Warner - 10/2000

**METHOD OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION** Progressive Dispensationalism maintains the literal (normal) method of biblical interpretation as the default hermeneutic. Progressive Dispensationalists also rely heavily on the New Testament writers' interpretations and applications of Old Testament prophecy. This is more than simply applying a 'model' of interpretation based on a 'style' established by the New Testament writers. It is accepting their actual interpretations and applications of Old Testament prophecy at face value.

**ARE PROGRESSIVE DISPENSATIONALISTS REALLY 'DISPENSATIONAL?'** Progressive dispensationalists are often accused of not being true 'dispensationalists.' This begs the question – what is a dispensationalist? Is a dispensationalist one who sees a series of 'dispensations' in God's dealings with mankind? Is a dispensationalist one who sees a future tribulation, followed by Christ's second coming to the earth to establish His Millennial Kingdom, with Israel inheriting the land promised her, and being head of the nations? Is a dispensationalist one who interprets Scripture literally? If these are what characterize dispensational beliefs, then surely progressive dispensationalists are true 'dispensationalists,' since we firmly hold to all of these things. Progressive dispensationalists therefore cannot rightly be charged with "replacement theology" – the belief that God is finished with Israel, and the Church has usurped all of the promises at Israel's expense.

**DISTINCTIVES OF PROGRESSIVE DISPENSATIONALISM** Progressive Dispensationalists see a progression of dispensational economies in a single unfolding plan to redeem mankind. We acknowledge only one means of salvation for all time, by grace through faith. The effect of the sacrifice of Christ was retroactive for the Old Testament saints who died in faith [Heb. 9:15], "*that they should not be made perfect apart from us.*" [Heb. 11:40]. It was God's original purpose "*that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth-- in Him.*," [Eph. 1:10]. Paul was referring to an already accomplished union of Old Testament and New Testament saints. "*For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.*" [Eph. 3:14,15].

**THE PRIMARY DIFFERENCE - 'PARENTHESIS' vs. 'PROGRESSION'** Traditional dispensationalists typically see the 'church age' as an interruption or parenthetical period in God's dealing with Israel. The church is seen as unrelated to Israel and the new covenant promised in Jeremiah 31:31-34. Believers of this dispensation are segregated from believers of other dispensations in purpose and destiny. Consequently, they see the new covenant as entirely future, concerning Israel during the Millennium. This segregation of saints is best seen in the concept of the 'Church' being exclusively the Bride of Christ to the exclusion of other saints. Progressive dispensationalists however believe the 'church age' is the fulfillment of certain promises in the Old Testament, regarding the new covenant, and salvation of Gentiles. Rather than being unrelated to God's program for Israel, the Church is an integral part of that program, and is currently participating in the new covenant promises in this dispensation. Progressive dispensationalists believe the New Covenant was inaugurated by Jesus Himself, by shedding His blood, [Luke 22:20, Heb. 8:6, Heb. 9:15]. Jeremiah prophesied the New Covenant would be made with Israel [Jer. 31:31-34]. A look at the Gospels shows the 'good news' was originally presented to Israel exclusively. In fact, when Jesus sent His disciples out to preach the gospel the first time He explicitly told them not to preach to Gentiles [Matt. 10:5,6]. Later we find Paul's acknowledgment of this fact with the words, "*to the Jew first, and also to the Greek*" [Rom. 1:16, 2:9,10]. The crucial difference can be summed up as whether the Church is the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, and whether saints of various dispensations should be seen as segregated.

**JESUS INAUGURATED THE NEW COVENANT - ISRAEL NOT CAST ASIDE** God did not cast Israel aside, or withdraw the offer of the New Covenant because of Israel's rejection. Rather, Jesus established the New Covenant with a believing remnant of Israel, His Jewish disciples. Jesus said to them, "***This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.*** [Luke 22:20]. In Romans 11, Paul argued strenuously that God has NOT cast Israel aside. "*I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew. ... Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace.*" [Rom. 11:1,2,5]. Paul's point is NOT that God's program for Israel has been suspended, as Traditional Dispensationalism teaches, or even that God is finished with Israel, as 'Replacement Theology' teaches. Rather, "***blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.***" [vs. 25]. **Consequently, part of Israel was not blinded. It was with this remnant that Jesus established the New Covenant.**[Rom. 11: 16-29]

Paul concluded his thought in Romans eleven with the parable of the Olive Tree. Jews who did not accept Jesus were likened to natural branches broken off of the olive tree. That some natural branches remained in the tree, both before and after the unbelievers were broken off and wild branches grafted in, **demonstrates a CONTINUOUS status of believing Jews both before and after Christ.** The grafting in of the wild branches shows a uniting of Gentiles with the believing part of Israel. So, in effect, Paul has illustrated a continuation of God's fulfilling His covenants and promises with Israel in this dispensation, albeit with only a remnant. But, isn't that the way it has always been? Only a small remnant went into the 'promised land.' Only a small remnant returned from the Babylonian captivity. And only a remnant have received the New Covenant.

The fact that Gentiles of this dispensation partake in the Jewish covenants and blessings is clearly established in Scripture. For example, Paul encouraged the Gentile saints to collect an offering for their Jewish brethren in Jerusalem who were in need. "***For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things.***" [Rom. 15:27]

**THE DAVIDIC COVENANT AND THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM** Some progressive dispensationalists believe the Davidic Covenant is also partially fulfilled during this dispensation, with Christ seated on David's throne at the right hand of the Father. This in no way diminishes His future reigning in the Millennium. However, this is NOT a crucial issue within progressive dispensationalism. Other progressive dispensationalists, including this author, agree with traditional dispensationalists that this covenant will only be inaugurated upon the second coming. On Palm Sunday, the crowds cried, "***Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord***" [Matt. 21:9]. This was the crowd's acknowledgment that Jesus was the one to fulfill the Davidic Covenant, and they expected Him to assume the throne immediately, [see: Luke 19:11]. However, when the scribes and priests heard the crowd call Jesus the "Son of David" they were "sore displeased." A few days later, after Jesus' scathing denouncement of the Scribes and Pharisees, He said, "***Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.***" [Matt. 23:38,39]. Jesus implied that taking His seat as King of Israel, in fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant, was suspended until Israel repents as a nation. This will only occur at the second coming of Jesus, when they "***look on Him whom they have pierced***" [Zech. 12:10], and then "***all Israel shall be saved,***" [Rom. 11:26]. That the Davidic Covenant will only be inaugurated when Israel is restored is clearly stated in Jeremiah 23:5-8.

#### **PROBLEMS OF TRADITIONAL DISPENSATIONALISM RESOLVED IN PROGRESSIVE DISPENSATIONALISM**

**Major Problem #1 Old Testament Prophecy applied to the Church by New Testament writers.** If the present dispensation is a 'parenthesis' in God's plan for Israel, and the Church is not related to OT prophecy, we would not expect New Testament writers to apply Old Testament prophecy to the Church. Yet, there are many examples of this very thing. The most obvious example is the Day of Pentecost, where Peter interpreted the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Church as the direct fulfillment of Joel 2:28-32. Notice, Peter said, "***this IS that which was spoken by the prophet Joel.***" [Acts 2:15-21]. Peter's application of Joel fits right in with Progressive Dispensationalism. A few other noteworthy cases of Old Testament prophecy directly applied to the Church, are as follows: Acts 10:43, Acts 15:14-18, Rom. 1:1,2, Rom. 4:13-17,23,24, Rom. 9:32,33, Rom. 15:4,8-10, 2 Cor. 6:16-7:1.

**Major Problem #2 The New Covenant, promised to Israel, is now in force.** Paul wrote to the church in Corinth regarding their observance of the Lord's Supper, as a reminder of Jesus' establishment of the New Covenant. "***In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."*** For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes." [1 Cor 11:25-26]. This would hardly be appropriate had the New Covenant not been inaugurated, or if it applied exclusively to physical Israel. Paul also saw himself as having a role in the spread of the New Covenant among the Gentiles. "***Who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant.***" [2 Cor. 3:6]. Jesus was the "***mediator of a better covenant, which was established [past tense] on better promises***" [Heb. 8:6-13]. The writer then quoted Jeremiah 31:31-34 and applied the prophecy of the New Covenant to the Church. This is not to say that everything related to the New Covenant has been completely fulfilled. Jeremiah's prophecy said "***after those days ... all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them.***" The universal acceptance of the New Covenant by Israel will only occur **after** the partial blindness is removed. With the Mosaic Covenant, most of the promises and benefits pertained to their dwelling in the 'promised land.' Yet, these promises were not realized by the very generation who received them! For more than 40 years they wandered in the wilderness. Does this mean the Covenant made at Mt Sinai was suspended while they wandered in the wilderness? No! They simply had to wait until they reached Canaan before they could enjoy the full benefits of this covenant put into place at Mt. Sinai. The same is true of Israel under the New Covenant. The 'promised land' of the New Covenant is the Millennial Kingdom.

**Major problem #3 God Continues to Deal with Israel in this Dispensation.** Certain things have and are occurring in Israel's history since the Day of Pentecost that are the direct fulfillment of prophecy. This makes the traditional dispensational 'parenthetical' theory untenable.

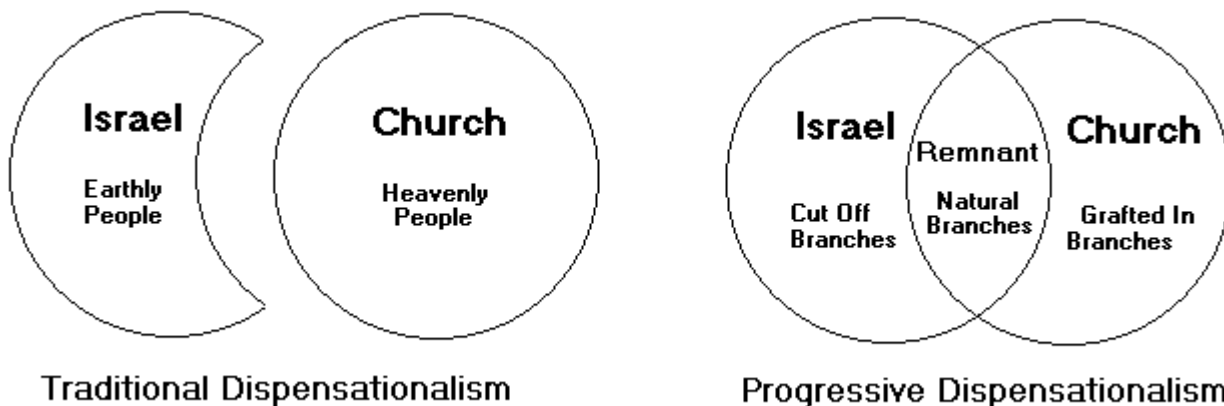
- a. The destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 was the direct fulfillment of Daniel 9:26.
- b. The regathering of Israel into their land is the likely fulfillment of Ezekiel 37.
- c. God is also using the salvation of the Gentiles to provoke (unbelieving) Israel to jealousy. [Rom. 10:18,19 & 11:11].

**Major Problem #4 Only a Remnant of Old Testament Israel is Saved.** Dispensationalists speak of "Israel" and the "Church" as two distinct peoples of God. While all true members of the "Church" are saved, and will be resurrected at the resurrection of the just, this is not the case with Israel. Traditional Dispensationalists are comparing apples to oranges here, when they refer to two different peoples of God.

Israel is a "nation," not a spiritual entity. Dispensationalists fail to address the fact that the Old Testament promises to Israel will be fulfilled literally in the Millennium, but ONLY by the righteous remnant who are raised at the resurrection of the Just. [Daniel 12:1-3,13, Mal. 3:16 - 4:3, Rom. 11:2-5]. Most of Israel is lost. This has been true throughout their entire history. The unfaithful majority of Israel will not be resurrected or inherit anything in the Kingdom. Dispensationalists speak of "Israel" as a nation, yet they fail to clearly distinguish the believers from the unbelievers within Israel. Consequently, they speak of the Old Testament promises being fulfilled for "Israel" in the Millennium, yet imply that this is merely all the Jews still alive after the tribulation. They have forgotten about all of the saints of Hebrews 11 from the Old Testament, who will receive the literal fulfillment of those promises to Israel in the Millennium, **in resurrected bodies**.

Progressive dispensationalists have simply taken this fact to its logical conclusion. Jews saved after Christ are still as much "Jews" as are the patriarchs, and will still partake of the promises along with the patriarchs, **in resurrected bodies**. All saints make up the "Church." Yet, Jewish believers have special promises from the Old Testament that are not cancelled for them just because they happen to live after Pentecost.

Progressive dispensationalism maintains the distinction between Israel and the Church, not by segregating them into two separate "peoples of God." But, by nationality, and recognizing that one group is merely a nation, and the other a spiritual entity. Israel is a nation made up of believers and unbelievers. The Church is a spiritual organism made up of the remnant of Jewish believers and the remnant of Gentile believers. Consequently, we have three entities - the Jews, the Gentiles, and the Church of God - the Church having members from both groups. The Jewish Millennial inheritance will be realized by the Jewish members of the Church. And the general promises of inheritance will be realized by the whole Church.



**Major Problem #5 Multiple Plans of Salvation** Many traditional dispensationalists have devised different plans of salvation for Israel and the Church. Pre-tribulationists usually claim that during the tribulation, the plan of salvation will incorporate the Old Covenant in some way. Salvation for the Old Testament saints is seen as having to do with works along with faith. Progressive dispensationalists see only one means of eternal salvation, through the blood of Christ. All saints are united in Christ by the blood of Christ, regardless of whether they lived before or after the cross. Animal sacrifices "could never take away sin." For the Old Testament saints who died in faith, Jesus' blood sacrifice is retroactive for them, to purchase eternal redemption for them after the fact. Hence, Paul, in Hebrews nine proclaims, *"And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance."* (Heb. 9:15). And after giving a list of some of these people of faith from the Old Testament, he writes, *"And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us."* (Heb. 11:39,40). Eternal redemption and the promise of eternal inheritance comes only through the blood of Christ via the New Covenant. Old Testament saints are brought into the New Covenant, and made complete along with us.

**PAUL AFFIRMS THE BASIC PREMISE OF PROGRESSIVE DISPENSATIONALISM** That Paul did not hold to Traditional Dispensationalism or a 'parenthetical Church age' is clearly indicated in his defense before Agrippa. He saw his mission to the Gentiles as the fulfillment of Israel's hope! *"And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers. To this promise our twelve tribes, earnestly serving God night and day, hope to attain. For this hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused by the Jews."* [Acts 26:6,7]. Paul then recounted his conversion on the road to Damascus, and Jesus' sending him to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. *"Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, ... "having obtained help from God, to this day I stand, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said would come-- "that the Christ would suffer, that He would be the first to rise from the dead, and would proclaim light to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles."* [Acts 26:19-23]

**DEVELOPING THE BIBLICAL FRAMEWORK FOR PROGRESSIVE DISPENSATIONALISM**

1. Jeremiah 31:31-34, Hebrews 8:6-13, 9:14,15, & 10:9-17. The New Covenant, promised to Israel is now in force.
2. Matthew 21:33-44, Luke 12:31,32, & Luke 22:28-30. Since the rulers of the Jews rejected Jesus, the positions of authority in Messiah's Kingdom was taken from them and given to the Jewish Disciples.
3. Matthew 8:11,12, Matt. 19:27-29, Luke 13:26-29, John 10:16, Hebrews 11:39,40. The Kingdom was also given to Gentile saints along with the believing Jewish remnant. (Notice the unified relationship between the Gentile saints and the Old Testament saints). All are 'one fold' and covered by the blood of Jesus.
4. Romans 2:28,29, Romans 4:13-16, Romans 9:6-8, Hebrews 6:12-20. Real 'Jews' in this dispensation are those with a circumcised heart. As adopted sons of Abraham, Gentiles also receive the Old Testament promises.

5. Romans 11:1-7, Romans 11:16-27. Not all Israel rejected Jesus Christ. The disciples and many other Jews believed. The rest were blinded. God fulfilled His "NC with the house of Israel" in the Jews who accepted Jesus as the Messiah, and believing Gentiles were 'grafted in.'

6. Romans 1:16, Rom 15:8-12,26,27. Jesus came to the Jews first. The Gentiles being added to the faithful remnant of Israel fulfills several Old Testament prophecies according to Paul, Psalm 18:49, Deut. 32:43, Psalm 117:1, Isa. 11:1,10. The Gentiles are partakers of the Jewish blessing, [vs. 26,27].

7. Galatians 3:6-29. Gentiles are the adopted children of Abraham. Because we are 'in Christ,' we are heirs of the Old Testament promises.

8. Galatians 4:4-7, Galatians 6:15,16. God established His New Covenant with THOSE WHO WERE UNDER THE LAW (Jews), then believing Israel received ADOPTED SONS (Gentiles). We now have the same blessings and promises as natural sons of Abraham.

9. Ephesians 1:4-14, Eph. 3:14,15, Eph. 4:4- 10. Old Testament and New Testament saints are 'in Christ.' This union had already taken place prior to Paul's writing to the Ephesian church.

10. Ephesians 2:11-22, Ephesians 3:4-6. Gentiles were formerly "*aliens from the commonwealth of Israel*" and "*strangers from the covenants of promise.*" Under the New Covenant we are "MADE NIGH" to Israel and are "fellow citizens," having become part of the "household of God." [see also Phil. 3:2,3]

#### NOTES:

Heb 9:15 15 And for this reason **He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant** that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. (NKJ)

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Heb 11:39-40 39 And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, 40 God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us. (NKJ)

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Luke 22:20 20 Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you. (NKJ)

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Heb 8:6-8 6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. 7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. 8 Because finding fault with them, He says: "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah-- (NKJ)

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Heb 9:15 15 And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. (NKJ)

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Jer 31:31-34 31 "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a **new covenant** with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah-- 32 "not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. 33 "But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 "No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more." (NKJ)

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Matt 10:5-6 5 These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. 6 "But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. (NKJ)

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Rom 1:16 16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

Rom 2:9-10 9 tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek; 10 but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. (NKJ)

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Rom 11:16-29 16 For if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches. 17 And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, 18 do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you. 19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in." 20 Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. 21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either. 22 Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off. 23 And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. 24 For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who are natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? 25 For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. 26 And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; 27 For this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins." 28 Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. 29 For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. (NKJ)

Psa 89:3-4 3 I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, 4 Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah. (KJV)

Psa 132:11 11 The LORD hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne. (KJV)

Isa 9:6-7 6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, **upon the throne of David**, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this. (KJV)

Luke 1:31-33 31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. 32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: **and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:** 33 **And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.** (KJV)

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Luke 19:11 11 And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because **they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.** (KJV)

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Jer 23:5-8 5 "Behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; a King shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. 6 In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell safely; now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. 7 "Therefore, behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "that they shall no longer say, 'As the LORD lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,' 8 "but, 'As the LORD lives who brought up and led the descendants of the house of Israel from the north country and from all the countries where I had driven them.' And they shall dwell in their own land." (NKJ)

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Joel 2:28-32 28 "And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. 29 And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. 30 "And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood and fire and pillars of smoke. 31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. 32 And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, as the LORD has said, among the remnant whom the LORD calls. (NKJ)

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Acts 2:15-21 15 "For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. 16 "But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 17 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. 18 And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy. 19 I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath: blood and fire and vapor of smoke. 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord. 21 And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.' (NKJ)

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Acts 10:43 43 "To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins." (NKJ)

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Acts 15:14-18 14 "Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. 15 "And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written: 16 'After this I will return and will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set it up; 17 So that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, says the Lord who does all these things.' 18 "Known to God from eternity are all His works. (NKJ)

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Rom 1:1-2 1 Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God 2 which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, (NKJ)

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Rom 4:13-17 13 For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. 14 For if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect, 15 because the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law there is no transgression. 16 Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all 17 (as it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations") in the presence of Him whom he believed-- God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; (NKJ)

Rom 4:23-24 23 Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, 24 but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, (NKJ)

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Rom 9:32-33 32 Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone. 33 As it is written: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, and whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame." (NKJ)

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Rom 15:4 4 For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. (NKJ)

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Rom 15:8-10 8 Now I say that Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers, 9 and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy, as it is written: "For this reason I will confess to You among the entiles, and sing to Your name." 10 And again he says: "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people!" (NKJ)

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2 Cor 6:16-7:1 16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people." 17 Therefore "Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you." 18 "I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty." 7:1 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. (NKJ)

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Heb 8:6-13 6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as **He is also Mediator of a better covenant**, which was established on better promises. 7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. 8 Because finding fault with them, He says: "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when **I will make a new covenant** with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah-- 9 "not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the Lord. 10 "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 11 "None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. 12 "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." 13 **In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.** (NKJ)

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Jer 31:31-34 31 "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah-- 32 "not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. 33 "But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 "No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more." (NKJ)

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Dan 9:26 26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and **the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.** (KJV)

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Ezek 37:1-14 1 The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, 2 And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. 3 And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest. 4 Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. 5 Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: 6 And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD. 7 So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. 8 And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. 9 Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. 10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. 11 Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. 12 Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. 13 And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, 14 And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD. (KJV)

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Rom 10:18-19 18 But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed: "Their sound has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world." 19 But I say, did Israel not know? **First Moses says: "I will provoke you to jealousy by those who are not a nation, I will move you to anger by a foolish nation."** (NKJ)

Rom 11:11 11 I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, **to provoke them to jealousy**, salvation has come to the Gentiles. (NKJ)

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Dan 12:1-3,13 1 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. 2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. 3 And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. ... 13 But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days. (KJV)

Mal 3:16-4:3 16 Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name. 17 And they shall be mine, saith the

LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. 18 Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. 4:1 For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. 2 But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. 3 And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts. (KJV)

Rom 11:2-5 2 God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, 3 Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. 4 But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. 5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. (KJV)

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Jer 31:31-34 31 "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when **I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah**-- 32 "not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. 33 "But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 "No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more." (NKJ)

Heb 8:6-13 6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as **He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.** 7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. 8 Because finding fault with them, He says: "**Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah**-- 9 "not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the Lord. 10 "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 11 "None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. 12 "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." 13 **In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete.** Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away. (NKJ)

Heb 9:14-15 14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? 15 And for this reason **He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death,** for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. (NKJ)

Heb 10:9-17 9 then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first that He may establish the second. 10 By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. 11 And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. 12 But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, 13 from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. 14 For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified. 15 But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before, 16 "**This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,**" 17 then He adds, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." (NKJ)

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Matt 21:33-44 33 "Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. 34 "Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit. 35 "And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. 36 "Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them. 37 "Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' 38 "But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.' 39 "So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. 40 "Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?" 41 They said to Him, "He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons." 42 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes'? 43 "**Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.** 44 "And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder." (NKJ)

Luke 12:31-32 31 "But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you. 32 "**Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.** (NKJ)

Luke 22:28-30 28 "But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials. 29 "**And I bestow upon you a kingdom,** just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, 30 "that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (NKJ)

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Matt 8:11-12 11 "And I say to you that **many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.** 12 "But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (NKJ)

Matt 19:27-29 27 Then Peter answered and said to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?" 28 So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that **in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.** 29 "**And everyone** who has left houses or

**brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.** (NKJ)

Luke 13:26-29 26 "then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.' 27 "But He will say, 'I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.' 28 "There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, **when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out.** 29 **"They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God.** (NKJ)

John 10:16 16 "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd. (NKJ)

Heb 11:39-40 39 And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, 40 God having provided something better for us, **that they should not be made perfect apart from us.** (NKJ)

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Rom 2:28-29 28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; 29 but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God. (NKJ)

Rom 4:13-16 13 For **the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.** 14 For if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect, 15 because the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law there is no transgression. 16 Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, **so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.** (NKJ)

Rom 9:6-8 6 But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, 7 nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, "In Isaac your seed shall be called." 8 That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but **the children of the promise are counted as the seed.** (NKJ)

Heb 6:12-20 12 that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who **through faith and patience inherit the promises.** 13 For **when God made a promise to Abraham,** because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, 14 saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you." 15 And so, after he had patiently endured, **he obtained the promise.** 16 For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute. 17 Thus God, determining to show more abundantly **to the heirs of promise** the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, 18 that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, **we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.** 19 **This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast,** and which enters the Presence behind the veil, 20 where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. (NKJ)

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Rom 11:1-7 1 I say then, **has God cast away His people? Certainly not!** For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 **God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew.** Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel, saying, 3 "Lord, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life"? 4 But what does the divine response say to him? "I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal." 5 **Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace.** 6 And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work. 7 What then? **Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded.** (NKJ)

Rom 11:16-27 16 For if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches. 17 And if **some of the branches were broken off,** and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, 18 do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you. 19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in." 20 Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. 21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either. 22 Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off. 23 And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. 24 For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who are natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? 25 For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. 26 And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; 27 For this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins." (NKJ)

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Rom 1:16 16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, **for the Jew first and also for the Greek.** (NKJ)

Rom 15:8-12 8 Now I say that Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision for the truth of God, **to confirm the promises made to the fathers,** 9 and **that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy, as it is written: "For this reason I will confess to You among the Gentiles, and sing to Your name."** 10 And again he says: "**Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people!**" 11 And again: "**Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles! Laud Him, all you peoples!**" 12 And again, Isaiah says: "**There shall be a root of Jesse; and He who shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in Him the Gentiles shall hope.**" (NKJ)

Rom 15:26-27 26 For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem. 27 It pleased them indeed, and **they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things.** (NKJ)

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Gal 3:6-29 6 just as Abraham "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." 7 Therefore know that **only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.** 8 **And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed."** 9 So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham. 10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not continue in 11 things which are written in the book of the law, to do them." 11 But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "the just shall live by faith." 12 Yet the law is not of faith, but "the man who does them shall live by them." 13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"), 14 **that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.** 15 Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though it is only a man's covenant, yet if it is confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it. 16 Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ. 17 And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect. 18 For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise. 19 What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator. 20 Now a mediator does not mediate for one only, but God is one. 21 Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. 22 But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. 24 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. 26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 **And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.** (NKJ)

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Gal 4:4-7 4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. 6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" 7 Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. (NKJ)

Gal 6:15-16 15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. 16 And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon **the Israel of God.** (NKJ)

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Eph 1:4-14 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, 5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved. 7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace 8 which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, 9 having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, 10 **that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth-- in Him.** 11 In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, 12 that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. 13 In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory. (NKJ)

Eph 3:14-15 14 For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 **from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,** (NKJ)

Eph 4:4-10 4 **There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism;** 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. 7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. 8 Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men." 9 (Now this, "He ascended"-- what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) (NKJ)

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Eph 2:11-22 11 Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh--who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands-- 12 that at that time **you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.** 13 **But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.** 14 For He Himself is our peace, **who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,** 15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, **so as to create in Himself one new man from the two,** thus making peace, 16 and **that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross,** thereby putting to death the enmity. 17 And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. 18 For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. 19 **Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,** 20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone, 21 in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, 22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. (NKJ)

Eph 3:4-6 4 by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), 5 which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: 6 **that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body,** and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, (NKJ)