

### **1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 (KJV)**

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.

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 & be sober.

7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

**“Ready of Not! Here He Comes, Part 1”  
“Can There Really Be ... A Post-Trib Rapture”**

- We are living a rapture ripe society ...
- And Jesus assured us that He would return ... and I want this series to educate us ... enlighten us ... encourage us but most of all ... get us ready for the rapture ...
- To trust someone means to have assured reliance on the character, ability, strength or truth of someone. OR, one in which confidence is placed.
- We know, according to the Bible, that the devil is not trustworthy.

### **John 8:44 (KJV)**

Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

- And just as much as you cannot trust the devil—YOU CAN TRUST GOD.
- The Bible teaches us in ...

### **Titus 1:2 (KJV)**

In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

- And then again in ...

### **Hebrews 6:18 (KJV)**

That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

- In other words, when he says he is going to do something then he will do it.
- And when he says that he is coming back ... I don't care how long its been ... I don't care how it looks ... I don't care who says He's not ... I don't care how much they mock us ... HE SAID HE'S COMING BACK AND IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO LIE ...
- The Bible prophecies that there will be people in the last days who will mock the coming of the Lord.

### **2 Peter 3:3-12 (KJV)**

3 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

6 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

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.

10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

- There are three main viewpoints in Christianity concerning the “rapture” or the “catching away” of the church.
- The word rapture does not appear in the Bible ... however the word “caught up” does ...

### **1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 (KJV)**

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 them which are asleep.

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.

- Verse 16 says the Lord will descend from heaven with a shout ... with a voice an an angel ... with a trumpet ...
- Those are the ingredients to make the rapture the rapture ...
- The first position which is also probably the most popular ... and not because it's the most biblical but because it's the easiest path ... is called Pre-Tribulation.
- This means that Christ will come back to receive all born again Christians in a secret snatching away just prior to the final seven years which is also taught as the tribulation.
- And then there is the next position called Mid-Tribulation.
- This simply means that the church will have to endure 3 ½ years of the tribulation but right thru the half way mark Christ will come and again, snatch his church away for the final 3 ½ years.
- And then there is the final position called Post-Tribulation.
- This simply means that the rapture of the church will not happen until the final seven years are coming to the end. Meaning, that the church will endure the tribulation period.

- Now, we know, that Jesus is coming back ... and so, since that point is settled ... we now just need to try to see if it is going to be a pre, mid or post-tribulation rapture.
- I believe that if we can understand, according to the Bible, the position of the rapture; then we can better witness and work for Kingdom of God and build credibility with sinners.
- For instance, if we believe in a pre-trib rapture then every “scary”, “unbelievable”, and “bizarre” thing that comes down the road is preached as the Rapture of the church.
- I remember in 1988 a book was circulated called “88 reasons why He is coming in 1988” And to be specific, he said, September 11, 12, 13 ... 1988.
- I saw hundreds of people get baptized, get the Holy Ghost, straighten up, live right—until Sept 13 came to pass and then Oct. 13 came to pass and then Dec. 13 and most everyone quit the church when the fear factor was diminished.
- And now they are probably thinking ... He’s never coming back.
- Y2K was another big fear factor for churches. We did not teach it here but many were teaching that Christ was coming to rapture us out of here before the Y2K bug would bite.
- I remember hearing one time as a kid that all the planets were lined up perfectly and that could only mean the coming of the Lord. HE DID NOT COME.
- You see when that time passes and the church is still here; it makes people wonder if God is ever going to come back.
- God is coming back! But we need to understand scripture so when catastrophic events happen that we will be able to understand them.
- Majority of the people think that the length of the tribulation is 7 years, ushered in immediately after the rapture of the church.
- Majority of the people think that the final 7 years, or the tribulation period, is also the “Wrath of God”.
- Both of these theories cannot withstand the shaking or scrutiny of scripture.
- The final seven years begin with an event called “The Confirmation of the Covenant”.

**Daniel 9:27 (KJV)**

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

- The first half of the final 7 years is a time when the Antichrist will rise to power through peace and diplomacy.

- He will be the leader of the One Word Government ...
- I am not sure that we will understand or know when the confirmation of the covenant takes place ... it is possible we could but I'm not sure.
- But according to Daniel 9:27 that in the midst of the week, he will cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.
- Between now and this event in the midst of the week, the Jews will reconstruct their temple.
- Once the temple is rebuilt, they will begin their animal sacrifices again. It will be like living out the Old Testament instead of just reading about it.
- And in the midst of what is called Daniel's seventieth week, the sacrifices stop.
- This is a key point, because it is this point that is going to help us determine how long the length of the week is.
- However, the final seven years is not considered the great tribulation.
- As a matter of fact, the first half of the final 7 years will probably be that of peace, disarmament, and relief.
- Because something catastrophic will happen that will push this world into the mindset that we need total peace regardless of what it cost.
- So the first 3 ½ years of the final 7 years is relatively quiet.
- We might not even know that we are in the final seven years until the halfway point.
- And, yes, I do ***not*** believe that the church is going to have a secret snatching away where we will be sheltered in some heavenly pavilion during this final seven years.
- As a matter of fact, I am going to show you scripture after scripture that teaches just the opposite.
- So the final week in Daniel's vision is really 7 years, and in the middle of those seven years, which will be 3 ½ years, the antichrist is going to stand in a rebuilt temple and basically claim to be God or claim to be the Messiah.
- That is what Daniel is talking about when he says he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease.

**Matthew 24:15-21 (KJV)**

15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

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

17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:

18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:

21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

- Jesus plainly tells us that the Great Tribulation will not begin until the antichrist stands in the temple and commits what we call “The Abomination of Desolation”.
- Daniel says that that happens when?? IN THE MIDST OF THE WEEK.
- Now if the week is seven years, then that means that this is going to happen 3 ½ years after the confirmation of the covenant.
- So, even if, we will not know when a covenant is confirmed—we will all know when a person stands in the rebuilt temple and stops the sacrifices.
- That person will be the Anti-Christ.
- The final 3 ½ years before Armageddon are given two names in Scripture—the Great Tribulation, the term we just read by Jesus Christ and the Wrath of Satan, a term used by John the Revelator.
- When does the Antichrist stand in the temple, according to Matthew 24:15 and Daniel 9:27???? In the midst of the final 7 years, which would be 3 ½ years.

### **Daniel 7:25 (KJV)**

And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

- How long? Time, times, dividing of time.
- Time is one year.
- Times is two years.
- And dividing of time is ½ a year.
- So he shall speak great words against the saints of the most High (who are the saints of the most High). We are!
- How is he going to speak against us if we are not here?
- Some have said that this is going to be what has been termed “Tribulation Saints”. However, those same people believe that the only thing that is stopping the Anti-Christ from being revealed is the Holy Ghost.
- And when the Spirit of God is removed then the Anti-Christ will have his hay day. If there is not Spirit—there can not be salvation.

### **Revelation 13:5 (KJV)**

And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.

- How long? 42 months ... 42 months divided by 12 = 3.5 years

### **Revelation 12:6 (KJV)**

And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.

- 1,260 days.
- 1260 days based on a 30 day month is 42 months and we just learned that 42 months is 3.5 years ...

### **Revelation 12:7-12 (KJV)**

7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

12 Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

- Notice, he is come down to the earth, having great wrath, because he knows he has but a short time. What's a short time? According to all the other references it is 3 ½ years.
- Again, in this passage it talks about how people overcame him by the blood of the Lamb. That is no doubt the Saints of the Living God ...

### **Revelation 12:13-17 (KJV)**

13 And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.

14 And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

15 And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

16 And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

17 And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

- The woman is protected for a time, times and half a time.
- Again, time is one year. Times 2 years. That's 3 years and then a half of time. That is 3 ½ years.
- When the dragon could not prevail against Israel he left her and started attacking the remnant of her seed.
- This is the New Testament Church. They keep the commandments of God and they have the testimony of Jesus Christ.
- So somewhere between the mid way point and the end, things are going to get very tough for the church. But remember, they loved not their lives unto death.
- We are seeing that the Great Tribulation is not 7 years and it is not the Wrath of God.
- It is 3 ½ years and it is the Wrath of the Devil.
- I have had so many people tell me that God is not a wife-beater. And he is not going to spank his children.
- It is not his wrath that we are enduring—it is the wrath of Satan.
- And if God is never going to let anything happen to his bride or if he is going to rescue them out of every peril and every situation—then He has to repent to many Christians.
- There have been countless thousands who were stoned, burned, beaten, hung, and starved because of their testimony.
- The first church grew so rapidly because of persecution. Could it be that we need a little persecution to wake us up out of our sleep????
- I want you to remember that we read in Matthew 24:21 that then shall there be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world, no, nor ever shall be.
- And remember in Revelation 12:7 is the war in heaven between Michael and Satan.
- Now we are about to read that same account in Daniel.

**Daniel 12:1-7 (KJV)**

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.

4 But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

5 Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river.

6 And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?

7 And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.

- How long is the Anti-Christ going to be in control and how long is he going to try to rule the world.
- Again, we see the answer. Time, times and a half. 3 ½ years.
- I want you to understand that in the midst of the week. In the final 3 ½ years of the 7 years. The anti-christ will stand in the temple and stop the sacrifice.
- It is at that same time that the war in heaven occurs and as the devil is kicked out and in my opinion this is when the devil will 100% possess the man that is now actually the anti-Christ.

## **2 Thessalonians 2:1-4 (KJV)**

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.

- There was obviously some people in Paul's day teaching that Jesus could come back at any moment.
- Paul is writing to this church to fix this problem and he gives 2 things that must happen before the coming of the Lord.

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.

- Paul plainly says that that day is not coming until there comes a falling away (which I believe began around 325 ad) and that the anti-christ would be revealed by standing in the temple.
- The temple is not even rebuilt yet—how can that day come until that happens.

- This does not give us a license to sin or postpone our relationship with God.
- If you have that attitude, you will no doubt end up in hell anyhow. You live for God because you love God, with all your heart, soul, mind and strength.
- You don't just leave for God because you think he might come in the middle of the night.

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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.

- It looks to me like the only people that are going to be surprised are the ones who are in the night—but we are not of the night.
- He has called us out of darkness, into his marvelous light.
- Jesus is coming back.
- The 7 year period is not the great tribulation.
- The Great Tribulation is not the Wrath of God.
- The Great Tribulation is the final 3 ½ years of the 7 years.
- The final 3 ½ years is the Wrath of Satan ... and satan will be punishing the saints ...