

# EVENTS DISPENSATIONALISTS TEACH ARE SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN AT THE TIME OF THE RAPTURE

Dispensationalists teach that the rapture is Christ coming *for* His saints at the beginning of the tribulation, as opposed to His coming *with* them seven years later. However, 1 Thessalonians 4:14 states that at the time Christ comes \_\_\_\_\_ His saints, He will bring *with* Him those who sleep. Additionally, 1 Thessalonians 3:13 states that when He comes in the rapture (*parousia*), He will come \_\_\_\_\_ all His saints. Since this happens at the rapture, it cannot happen seven years later at the revelation of Christ. This \_\_\_\_\_ the theory of the two future comings of Christ.

Dispensationalists also teach that the rapture is the resurrection of all dead believers in Christ (1 Thess. 4:16). This is the same time when all believers will be changed in a moment in a twinkling of an eye at the last trumpet (1 Cor. 15:51-55).

It is the same event as John records in Revelation 11:15-19, which is the last trumpet when Christ comes to reign eternally. However, Jesus said believers would be resurrected \_\_\_\_\_ (John 6:39-40, 44-54), not \_\_\_\_\_.

Furthermore, dispensationalists claim that at the rapture (*parousia*) believers will be caught up in the clouds to meet Jesus in the air (1 Thess. 4:17; Matt. 24:29-30).

When this takes place, the door of salvation will be closed and \_\_\_\_\_ (Rev. 22:11-12). There can be \_\_\_\_\_ after Jesus comes, period.

The rapture is Christ coming as a thief in the night (Matt. 24:42-43) and is supposed to be Christ's coming before the tribulation. But consider these questions about the 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 text:

- Does 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 teach a secret rapture of the Church?
- Does it teach a secret coming of Christ?
- Does it teach that the Church will be taken prior to a tribulation?
- When does the text say this event will take place?
- Is the rapture “Jesus coming as a thief in the night”?
- Is this the same as the Bridegroom coming for the Bride?
- Has something been read into the text that is not there?

So, what does the Bible say will happen when Jesus comes “as a thief in the night”?

- Christ will come *with* His saints (1 Thess. 3:13).
- It is called the “day of the Lord” (1 Thess. 5:2).

- In 1 Thessalonians 5:2, Paul uses “day of the Lord” to refer to the second coming of Christ (when he will come as a “thief”).
- In 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2, Paul says the “day of the Lord” is the same as Christ’s coming (*parousia*), or rapture.
- Likewise, Peter uses “day of the Lord” when he refers to Christ’s coming as a “thief” at the end of the age, when all elements shall melt with fervent heat and burn up and when the new heaven and the new earth will be ushered in creating eternity (2 Pet. 3:10). How then can this occur at the beginning of the tribulation?
- It is called the *parousia* and the “day of the Lord” in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2.

Note that in 2 Peter 3:10, Christ's coming as a *thief* is called the "day of the Lord." In 2 Peter 3:4, this coming of Christ is called the *parousia* or rapture. In 3:7, it is the day of \_\_\_\_\_ and perdition of ungodly men. In 3:10-11, it is when the earth and heavens are \_\_\_\_\_. In 3:12, it is called the coming of the day of God. In 3:13, it is when we look for and enter the new heavens and a new earth. Also, consider that according to 2 Peter 3:10, Christ comes as a thief. How can there be a tribulation and a millennium \_\_\_\_\_ the present heavens and earth are dissolved?

In Revelation 16:15, Jesus says, "Behold I am coming as a thief." He says this during the sixth vial, which is supposed to occur \_\_\_\_\_ of the tribulation. Jesus is saying that He has \_\_\_\_\_ come as a thief. Yet dispensationalists claim Christ's coming as a thief was to take place at the beginning of the tribulation period. It cannot be both.

All of these references bespeak a \_\_\_\_\_.

First Corinthians 15:54-55 states that at the resurrection, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_. It will be swallowed up

by victory and after this, no one will die. Yet dispensationalists

have people dying during both the tribulation and the millennium.

Who is right, the Bible or dispensationalists?

When Jesus comes, all will see Him, and the tribes will mourn (Rev. 1:7). Then they will see the son of man coming in clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Angels will sound a great trumpet and gather together God's elect from one end of heaven to another. There is \_\_\_\_\_ about this event.

These scriptures speak of the rapture (*parousia*), or the second coming of Christ, as \_\_\_\_\_ event.

They therefore prove that the rapture, as such, cannot be \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ of Christ.

None of these references teach that there will be a secret coming of Christ to gather His elect, but rather that it will be visible, with the sound of a trumpet and the voice of an archangel. Every eye shall see Him and all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him.

The dispensationalists say that the rapture (*parousia*) is Christ coming *for* His saints at the \_\_\_\_\_ of the tribulation, and then coming *with* them seven years later \_\_\_\_\_ the revelation [*apokalupsis*]. \_\_\_\_\_ is found in the texts—it is something that has been \_\_\_\_\_ by dispensationalists. God warns us not to add to His Word.

In Matthew 15:6, Jesus said we make the Word of God of non-effect by adding to it. Jesus also said it would be His Word that would judge us in the last day (John 12:48). How carefully then should we handle God's Word lest we be judged!

In his book *The Blessed Hope*, George Eldon Ladd says this about the rapture (or the *parousia*) of Christ:

The parousia will be a glorious event. Christ will destroy the Man of Lawlessness by the breath of his mouth and “by the manifestation (literally, ‘epiphany’ or ‘outshining’) of his parousia” (2 Thess. 2:8). The rendition of the King James version is not wrong: “by the brightness of the coming.” This epiphany will be a glorious event for Paul speaks of “the epiphany of the glory of our great God and our Saviour” (Titus 2:13). . . . We find the same teaching of a glorious visible parousia in Jesus’ words. “For as the lightning comes forth from the east, and is seen even unto the west; so shall be the parousia of the Son of man” (Matt. 24:27). It will be like a bolt of lightning, glorious, visible, evident to all.

(Ladd 1956, 63-64)

Alexander Reese, a premillennialist, has this to say about the new theory of a secret rapture:

It is a sentimental delusion that a secret Rapture, or a pre-tribulation Rapture, is the hope of the Church. Scripture, on the contrary, asserts in the clearest manner that the Glorious Appearing of Christ is the definite hope of Christians (Tit. 2:13) and with the terrible inconvenience of theorists, locates it at the Day of the Lord. From Matthew to the Book of Revelation the Lord and His Apostles set no other hope before the Church. The Rapture is a mere incident of the Appearing, spoken of in order to show the relation of sleeping to the living saints at the one Advent in glory, and especially that the saints who survive till the Advent will have no advantage at all over the dead in Christ. It is a stupid obsession to make the Rapture the touchstone of everything. Yet this is what is universally done [by dispensationalists]. (Reese 1934, 266)

## WHAT DOES 1 CORINTHIANS 15:51-52 TELL US?

In 1 Corinthians 15:51-52, Paul states, “Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”

What the text is saying is that a change will take place in the body of the living believer, which is a mystery. This change will take place in the living believer at the “last trumpet,” which will occur at the resurrection, as the dead will be raised incorruptible. At the resurrection, death will cease to exist (1 Cor. 15:55). After this, there will be no need for another resurrection, as no one will die after the last trumpet. According to 1 Corinthians 15:26, death will be the *last enemy* to be destroyed.

There can be no doubt that in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 a resurrection takes place. This makes these two passages, 1 Thess.

4:13-18 and 1 Cor. 15:51-55, the same event, as the Bible does not speak of the living believers being changed in a moment in the twinkling of an eye at two different occasions.

First Corinthians 15:54-55 states that at the resurrection, death will come to an end, for it will be swallowed up by victory. After this, no one will die. Yet dispensationalists have people dying during both the tribulation and the millennium. Who is right, the Bible or dispensationalism?

Revelation 11:15-19 is the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet, which corresponds to 1 Corinthians 15:51-55, when believers at the last trumpet are changed in a moment in the twinkling of an eye. Revelation 11:15 states that at that time, Christ will come to reign eternally, not just for a thousand years.

Revelation 11:18 also states that at the same time, the dead shall be judged and the saints of God rewarded. These references, then,

have to be one and the same event. According to Revelation 10:5-7, the consummation of all things will come to pass at the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet, as time will be no longer. This is in harmony with 1 Corinthians 15:51-55.

SYNONYMOUS THINGS THAT TAKE PLACE AT CHRIST'S PAROUSIA	
<b>Clouds</b>	Matt. 24:30; Matt. 26:64; Mark 13:26; Mark 14:62; Acts 1:9; 1 Thess. 4:17; Rev. 1:7; Rev. 14:14
<b>Trumpet</b>	Matt. 24:31; 1 Cor. 15:52; Rev. 11:15; 1 Thess. 4:16
<b>Angels</b>	Matt. 13:39, 41, 49; Matt. 16:27; Matt. 24:31; Mark 8:38; Mark 13:27; Luke 9:26; 1 Thess. 4:16; 2 Thess. 1:7
<b>Loud Noise</b>	Matt. 24:31; 1 Thess. 4:16; 2 Pet. 3:10
<b>Thief</b>	1 Thess. 5:2, 4; Matt 24:43; Luke 12:39; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 3:3; Rev. 16:15
<b>Day of the Lord</b>	Amos 5:18; Isa. 2:12; 1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:10-13
<b>Resurrection</b>	1 Thess. 4:16; John 6:39, 40, 44, 54; 11:24; Matt. 24:31; 1 Cor. 15:51, 52, 54, 55; Isa. 25:8; Job 14:12, 14; 19:25-27; Hos. 13:14

All these events take place at the second coming of Christ, not at a secret rapture seven years before the second coming. It must be stated that I believe we will be caught up, but that it will occur when Jesus comes back during the second advent.

## CONCERNING THE WRATH OF GOD

It has been stated that the Church, God's people, must be taken out \_\_\_\_\_ the wrath of God during the tribulation.

But where in the Bible does it state that wrath from God will be poured out on His people? This theory is a fabrication that is not found in Scripture. The text that dispensationalists have used to support this claim has been taken out of context and puts fear into God's people.

We are told that this wrath is the wrath of God that is poured out in Revelation 6-19 under the seals, trumpets, and vials. This period of time is also supposed to be Daniel's seventieth week, which dispensationalists have postponed and made to be the tribulation period after the Church has been raptured. However, as we have seen, Daniel's seventieth week was fulfilled in chronological sequence relative to that of the sixty-nine weeks.

The text that dispensationalists use for this wrath is 1 Thessalonians 5:9. Read in context with verses 9-11, this passage states, “For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain *salvation* through our Lord Jesus Christ, who *died* for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing” (emphasis mine).

Does this not tell us that the wrath we are delivered from is the wrath that rests on sin and the unrepentant? This wrath has been removed by salvation through Christ’s death on the cross and therefore has nothing to do with \_\_\_\_\_.

The Thessalonians were to comfort one another personally with these words.

Since the text was applicable to the Thessalonians \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, how can it be said to  
apply to a tribulation wrath that would occur thousands of years  
later?

The Bible teaches that the gospel includes \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. John the Baptist, in his message to  
repent, warned of the wrath to come (Matt. 3:7). The Pharisees and  
Sadducees who came to him were asked, “Who warned you to flee  
from \_\_\_\_\_ to come?” Because the “wrath”  
applied to them \_\_\_\_\_ due to their lack  
of repentance, it could not be \_\_\_\_\_ wrath.

In Romans 1:16-18, Paul affirms that the gospel includes the  
wrath of God. Paul states that the gospel of which he is not  
ashamed includes salvation, the righteousness of God, and the  
wrath of God. Verse 18 states: “For the wrath of God is revealed

from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.” Romans 5:9 likewise states the same truth: “Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.”

The blood of Christ has released \_\_\_\_\_ from the wrath of God \_\_\_\_\_. John 3 also confirms this position. In verses 3-5, Jesus was talking to Nicodemus about being born again. In verses 14-18, Christ is depicted as being lifted up on the cross, bearing the sins of mankind and giving eternal life to those who believe on Him. Verses 19-20 state that those who do not come to Christ, who is the light, are still under the condemnation and wrath of sin. John 3:36 succinctly verifies the preceding: “He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the *wrath* of God abides on him” (emphasis mine).

In conclusion, the wrath depicted in 1 Thessalonians 5:9 is not tribulation wrath but God's judgment of wrath on the unrepentant during the Day of Judgment. Therefore, dispensationalists take the text out of context. There is no compilation of Scripture that can prove their point in question.

The Bible teaches that Daniel's seventieth week began with the ministry of Jesus Christ at His baptism by John the Baptist. John in his baptizing revealed Christ as the Messiah to el (John 1:31). Jesus said the law and the prophets were until John (Matt. 11:12-13; Luke 16:16). What does this tell us? It certainly states that the Old Covenant \_\_\_\_\_ with John the Baptist's ministry.