

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

One of the saddest things in Christendom has been the “signs of the times” being misused. We have seen the Millerites (now SDA Seventh Day Adventists) looking for a literal returning of Christ and when it didn’t happen they “spiritualized” it. We have seen the Jehovah Witnesses say only “144,000” will be saved misinterpreting Revelation 7:4 (which is clearly DURING the Tribulation which has not taken place yet). We see many people making predictions about Israel that are anything from “pre-cursors” to the Tribulation period to being utterly outlandish (and everything in between) – making Christendom again and again look absolutely foolish when they don’t come true. The list goes on and on. People say, “This one is the Anti-Christ, no this person is, no it is “so and so”.

I praise God for making the Book of Revelation so easy to understand. The Rapture is Imminent – Christ will come and take up those who are His (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17: it is a literal happening and not a cultural event like N.T. Wright and others say among other wrong teachings on the subject). It will come like a thief in the night –there are no signs as to that part of Christ’s Second Coming. After the Rapture the Tribulation (time of Jacob’s Trouble) will come when God judges Israel. THEN the signs of the times (the time of the Tribulation – the Day of the Lord – etc. see: [NAMES FOR THE TRIBULATION](#)).

The key verse to the Book of Revelation is Revelation 1:19 (see: [REVELATION EXPOSITORY](#)) where John is told to “Write therefore, what you have seen (Rev.1:12-18: Christ as Judge), what is now (Rev.2-3: The church age), and what will take place later (future prophetic events starting with Rev.4:1-2 [the Rapture], **Rev.4:2-5:14** [the saints being judged for works at the Bema Seat], **Rev.6:1-18:24** [the time of Jacob’s trouble – the Tribulation] finishing with the Marriage of the Lamb, the 2nd Part of Christ’s Second Coming, the Judgment of the Nations (goat-sheep nations in Matthew 25:31-46), the 1,000 year Millennial Kingdom, The Great White Throne, the Renovation of the Earth by Fire, the Seven New Things in Revelation 21, and the Great Abdication (1 Corinthians 15:24-28).

In order to stop all the confusion one must compare Rev.6 to Matt.24 (signs of the times/ signs the Tribulation is here). These verses below clearly show that what Jesus is talking about are signs that the Tribulation is here and what is going to take place during the tribulation (THAT GENERATION). This stops ALL THE CONFUSION. When someone says, “Jesus is coming soon!!” and give you a sign you can tell them that the signs are AFTER THE RAPTURE and begin at the BEGINNING OF THE TRIBULATION (which is why the J.W.’s assertion of the 144,000 in Rev.7:4 is so ridiculous because the Tribulation has not yet begun.) I pray God will lead you and guide you into ALL TRUTH as you do this study!!!

Revelation 6:1-2 (compare to Matt.24:3-5): Christ opens the first of the seven-sealed scroll, and the rider on the white horse (probably Antichrist) appears, using diplomacy and the promise of peace to establish his one-world government.

Revelation 6:3-4 (see Matt.24:3-5): The second seal introduces a great world war.

Revelation 6:5-6 (see Matt.24:3-5): The third seal begins the suffering of famine and inflation (the aftermath of war).

Revelation 6:7-8 (see Matt.24:3-5): The fourth seal results, as do all wars, in death, but in this case it totals one-fourth of the people and living creatures. By today’s population standards, that would amount to one-and-a-half billion people.

Revelation 6:9-11 (see Matt.24:3-5): This passage introduces the martyrdom of those who are converted under the preaching of the 144,000 Jewish witnesses described in chapter 7. An innumerable number of people receive Christ and are martyred by the government leader and harlot (the religious system described in chapter 17), who gets her power from the Antichrist. Note that evangelism during

this period is back in the hands of the Jews. Since the church is absent, the 144,000 apostle-Paul-type believers will make powerful evangelists.

Revelation 6:12-17 (see Matt.24:3-5): This sixth seal exhibits the wrath of God poured out in the form of a mighty earthquake, the like of which has never been experienced. It is so severe that people call on the rocks to fall on them.

God's Word is true!! And He promises to continually guide us. The Rapture and following Tribulation are not something Christians use to ESCAPE God's Wrath – God's wrath was put UPON JESUS. And when we repent and receive by faith Christ into our hearts we become His child. We will be through many tribulation_S (persecution) but we will NOT have to go through the Tribulation:

RAPTURE: (1st part of His Second Coming) “what will take place later” Revelation 4:1-2 (the RAPTURE & prophetic future to Rev.22)

(Revelation 4:1-2) “After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. **CHRIST'S 2nd COMING**

And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this. At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it.”

(1 Thess.4:16-17) For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

The “dead saints” will be caught up first and we who are “alive” (the church) will be caught up together with them.

• NOTE: Jesus does not put his feet on the ground here. We are “caught up in to the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.”

At the Transfiguration, John (Peter & James) is a picture of the church, Moses is a picture of Old Testament saints, Elijah is a picture of the raptured.

(John 11:25-26) 25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life.

He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. ("dead in Christ": notice some “die” here) 26 And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. ("raptured ones": notice some “never die” here) Do you believe this?”

(Matthew 24:37-40) As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left.

(1 Thess. 1:10) and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead — Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

(1 Thessalonians 5:9) For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

(Genesis 5:24) Enoch walked faithfully with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.

(2 Kings 2:11) As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind.

COMPARE SCRIPTURES SIDE BY SIDE: John 14:1-3 to 1 Thess.4:13-18: trouble (v.1) sorrow (v.13) / **believe (v.1) believe (v.14)** /

God, me (v.1) Jesus, God (v.14) / **told you (v.2) say to you (v.15)** / come again (v.3) coming of the Lord (v.15) / **receive you (v.3) caught up (v.17)** / to myself (v.3) to meet the Lord (v.17) / **be where I am (v.3) ever be with the Lord (v.17)**

BELIEF IN RAPTURE MOTIVATES US: “Everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure” (1 John 3:3). Our Rapture hope is said to urge a watchfulness for Christ Himself (1 Cor. 15:58); to encourage faithfulness in church leaders (2 Tim. 4:1-5); to encourage patient waiting (1 Thess. 1:10); to result in expectation and looking (Phil. 3:20; Titus 2:13; Heb. 9:28); to promote godly moderation (Phil. 4:5); to excite “heavenly-mindedness” (Col. 3:1-4); to bring forth successful labor (1 Thess. 2:19-20); to experience comfort (1 Thess. 4:18); to urge steadfastness (2 Thes. 2:1-2; 1 Tim. 6:14; 1 Peter 5:4); to infuse diligence and activity (2 Tim. 4:1-8); to promote mortification of the flesh (Col. 3:4-5; Titus 2:12-13); to require soberness (1 Thess. 5:6; 1 Peter 1:13); to contribute to an abiding with Christ (1 John 2:28; 3:2); to support patience under trial James 5:7-8); and to enforce obedience (2 Tim. 4:1).