

Hope For Today

Overwhelming Biblical evidence for a coming pre-tribulation rapture.

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Introduction

The subject of the Rapture of the true Church is not always understood, accepted and believed by many Christians. In my studies over the last two years on this subject I have uncovered over thirty verses from both old and New Testament that speak of the snatching away of the church. This event could happen at any moment- we are closer now than we have ever been. I will uncover and discuss these verses here. This is our Hope For Today...

Revealing of pre-tribulation Rapture

Before we look at the more than 30 other verses on the subject of the Rapture, let's compare the authority of the believer in these two verses:

In the following verse, Jesus speaking to His disciples, anoints them to have authority over the enemy (satan). This authority was and is passed onto every believer since through the Holy Spirit.

1) **Luke 10:19 KJV** [19] *Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.*

But now we read in the book of Revelation, that the Beast (Satan, Anti-Christ) has power over the 'saints'.

2) **Revelation 13:7-8 KJV** [7] *And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. [8] And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

These two verses both speaking of the believers seem to contradict each other. When did the church lose their authority they have in Jesus over the enemy as mentioned in the passage from Luke?

We are told over and over that we can exercise our authority over the Devil and his demons. Jesus Himself gave all who believe on Him that authority, so when did he take it away? Well He didn't take that authority away, He took His Church away.

These two verses show that there are two dispensations (Grace and Wrath) of Christian in the end times. The first: the Church of Jesus has existed since His resurrection and will end when we are raptured or caught up to Heaven. The second group are the tribulation saints who become believers during the 7 year tribulation period. These will have no authority over the Devil because the antichrist will overcome them and they will pay for their beliefs with their lives.

This is no "new" doctrine but a revealing for the end times. Someone once claimed that there are no new revelations from God, but the Bible says otherwise. Consider:

Daniel 12:8-9 KJV [8] And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things ? [9] And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

God gave Daniel prophecy about the end times and some he didn't understand because they were only to be revealed during the end times. And so God is opening up His Word more and more during these last days so that His people can understand the time for Jesus return is soon. GET READY...

Caught Up

The main passage of scripture that supports the doctrine of a Rapture is this one from 1 Thessalonians. Whilst it is a clear teaching that Christians will be 'raptured', some believe the trumpet call is the seventh and last mentioned in Revelation. This would incorrectly put the rapture AFTER the tribulation period (commonly known as the post-Tribulation rapture). God's intent is not for His followers to go through the tribulation period, this will be a time of His wrath and judgement of the unbeliever. In the more than 30 passages that we will look at, it is evident that the true believer and followers of Christ will be saved from the tribulation period which is going to be the most horrific period in world history...

3) **1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 KJV** [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.*

In the following verse we see that the rapture event happens instantly. It's not a drawn out process. It takes place in the space of milliseconds "twinkling of the eye". At this very point in the history of mankind the world moves from the dispensation of grace to the dispensation of wrath. At the very point the rapture happens all people who have ever been born-again followers of Jesus, both dead and alive will be taken into Heaven to "be with Him."

In that very instant we will receive our immortal bodies that from that moment on can never again die. The Bible says when this happens we will be 'like Him' (Jesus), meaning we will have the same type of body as Jesus had after His resurrection. Remember when He rose from the dead how He still had a physical body (to Thomas He said "touch me and feel the scars on my body and see it really is me) but it was a supernatural body also. He was able to 'appear' in a room that was locked from the inside, he could quite simply walk through walls even though He had a physical body. This is the same immortal body we will receive the instant the rapture takes place. But not before the Christians who have died and are buried. The spirits of these believers will be reunited with their physical immortal bodies as they rise out of their graves and we will all be reunited in the air (probably in another dimension) with Christ.

4) **1 Corinthians 15:51-52 KJV** [51] *Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, [52] In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

We have already looked at the fundamental scriptures that form the foundation of the Rapture doctrine. But this is where it starts getting even more exciting. It is my belief that there are many scriptures that reveal or give credence to the rapture and more specifically the Pre-Tribulation rapture.

It's also very interesting to note the idea of rapturing or snatching away a human being from the face of the earth is not a far-fetched notion. There have already been rapture-events that the Bible has recorded.

The first person to be raptured was Enoch. He was the seventh generation from Adam (seven also being a significant indicator). We read:

5) **Genesis 5:24 KJV** [24] *And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.*

And again:

6) **Hebrews 11:5 KJV** [5] *By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.*

The next to be raptured was the prophet Elijah:

7) **2 Kings 2:11 KJV** [11] *And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.*

The next pattern of a rapture is Jesus Himself:

8) **Luke 24:51 KJV** [51] *And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.*

Another rapture type event happened on the road to Jerusalem when the disciple Philip shared the gospel with the eunuch and then baptized him in the river. Once the baptism was completed Philip simply disappeared...:

9) **Acts 8:39-40 KJV** [39] *And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing. [40] But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.*

Philip found himself some distance away in another province in the city of Azotus (modern day Ashdod, twenty miles north of Gaza).

Paul himself makes claim to some 'type' or rapture event happening to him and he was caught up to the third Heaven:

10) **2 Corinthians 12:2 KJV** [2] *I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven.*

Even John, exiled on the Island of Patmos experienced a 'catching away' event when the Angel told him to "come up"....:

11) **Revelation 4:1 KJV** [1] *After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.*

So it's no new thing for God to instantly remove whom He will from earth and bring them up to Heaven. The rapture is not an idea invented by man or preacher in the 1800's as some make claim. Rapturing people is what God does... and soon it will be our turn! Amen, look up...

The following verse in Isaiah is what began for me a journey to seek out the 'hidden' clues for a rapture event. It was whilst reading through Isaiah that I came to this verse and I couldn't believe what I was reading. A book written more than 2700 years ago seemed to outline the rapture that we are all expecting to happen any day now.

What I find extremely interesting is that it speaks to the rapture in the exact order described in Revelation. First the dead in Christ will emerge from their graves and be reunited with their spirits. Then those who are alive (followers of Jesus) will be taken to Heaven where they will remain for a short while (7 years?), whilst God pours out his wrath on a sinful earth (7 year Tribulation).

*12) **Isaiah 26:19-21 KJV** [19] Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead. [20] Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. [21] For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.*

Isn't it interesting that verse 20 says "shut your doors behind you", meaning the rapture is a one-time event, if you miss it you miss out. This idea also parallels the parable Jesus told of the 10 virgins who awaited the bridegrooms return. Only five of them had oil in their lamps as they waited. Whilst the other five went in search of oil, the groom returned- the door opened and the five who were ready entered in. Then the door was shut behind them and the five foolish virgins were left out. We must ensure that we are ready and 'looking' for His return. Once that door has closed it will be too late.

Another 'rapture' verse hidden deep in the Bible is this:

*13) **Zephaniah 1:7 KJV** [7] Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord God : for the day of the Lord is at hand: for the Lord hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath bid his guests.*

This verse from the Old Testament book Zephaniah speaks to the sacrifice of our savior Jesus who gave His life for us. His sacrifice was our invitation to receive eternal life with Him. The question should be asked then 'to what has the Lord God invited His guests'? The book of Revelation tells us of a marriage supper of the Lamb, which is a time of celebration in Heaven when Jesus receives His Church (at the rapture). At the same time that the saints are celebrating in Heaven, the earth on the other hand will be going through the terrifying seven year Tribulation period. What's more astounding is that in Jewish culture a wedding celebration lasts for seven days, in Heaven the wedding will last for seven years, corresponding to the seven years of Tribulation on earth.

Again in the book of Zephaniah we see God hiding away His church from His judgement of the earth.

*14) **Zephaniah 2:1-3 KJV** [1] Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired; [2] Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the Lord's anger come upon you. [3] Seek ye the Lord , all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger.*

'Gather yourselves together' speaks of a taking away of the church which here is referred to as the 'nation not desired.' Isn't it interesting that in these end times it is not considered desirable to follow Jesus. People want nothing to do with God as they continue living their lives of unrepentant sin. In this passage the 'meek of the earth' refers to the followers of Jesus.

Pay special attention to the word 'before' - used 4 times to emphasise the fact. Before the decree, before the day, before the fierce anger, before the day of the Lord. The rapture (gathering together) happens before the tribulation (day of the Lord), and 'ye shall be hid IN THE DAY of the Lord's anger is evident.

Make no mistake, the second coming of Jesus (about seven years after the rapture) will be a terrible and fearful day for the inhabitants of the earth. He will not return meek and mild as in His first coming. This time he will come with all power as He obliterates all evil from this earth and He will rule as the King of ALL Kings with a rod of iron.

15) *Psalm 12:1 KJV [1] Help, Lord ; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men.*

16) *Micah 7:2 KJV [2] The good man is perished out of the earth: and there is none upright among men: they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net.*

Both of these verses speak of a time when there will be no good or godly men left on earth. Even at the most wicked periods of human history there have always existed a few good men. When God looked down on the earth and saw wickedness everywhere He was grieved that He had even made man. And so we know the story that God decided to wipe out all wickedness with a global catastrophic flood. But there were a few good men still around and He saved them from destruction- Noah and his three sons and their wives. Out of a global population estimated by some as in the millions, God found eight godly souls.

Later in Biblical history we read that God decided to destroy the towns of Sodom and Gomorra because of all the wickedness that was being done there. Similar to what is happening in our modern day and age, Sodom and Gomorra were filled with all kinds of sexual immorality and perversion. But Abraham pleaded with God not to destroy the place for the sake of a few good men. As it turned out there weren't many, just Abraham and his nephew Lot. But God removed them before bringing destruction onto the cities with fire and brimstone.

(As a side note, both these two events are patterns of a pre-Tribulation rapture.)

So regarding the two verses above it seems that there will be a time and day when there are NO good men left on the earth... not even one. This could technically only be possible seconds after a rapture of the true Jesus followers, because once they have been removed from the earth everyone else left behind, in God's eyes will be wicked.

The Apostle Paul, penned the book of 2Thessalonians almost 20 years after the death of Christ. The first Christians knew about the rapture but some amongst them were saying that it had already happened and that they had somehow missed it. Paul knew better and so in the beginning of the book he expounds on the rapture stating that it had not yet happened because there were certain things that were to take place first.

Firstly the church as a body would experience a corporate apostasy. This means that most so called Christians would actually turn their backs on the truth and religiously follow their own doctrines. We can see today how many churches and denominations have allowed heresy and apostasy into their churches. Some believers even deny Jesus return or the Tribulation or Millennial reign of Christ. Their doctrines have been influenced and infiltrated by the devil. They think it's okay to molest children or ordain gay priests. Some even support the evils of abortion or speak out against Israel in favour of the Philistines. This is the apostate church.

Second; The apostasy or falling away precedes the rise of the antichrist who will rule the entire globe and enforce his mark on all citizens. But before the antichrist can be revealed something else needs to happen and that is the removal of the one that 'letteth' or Withholds. Let's read 2 Thessalonians 2:1 onwards...

17) 2 Thessalonians 2:1-7 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. [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. [5] Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? [6] And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. [7] For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

The key verses to understanding rapture here are 6&7.: the Holy Spirit which abides in all true followers of Jesus is currently withholding the arrival of antichrist. The true church are the ones holding back an all-out wicked assault on the human race. But at the event of the rapture the Holy Spirit filled church will be 'taken out of the way' and there will be no more moral compass to guide this world, making the path open for the antichrist to be revealed.

This is another reason we do not need to fear the antichrist or his mark, as we will already have been raptured by that point. We can see via the world stage however that we are close to his rise and therefore even closer to the rapture. This is our Hope, so look up... "come Lord Jesus come!"

In the previous post we saw how the Holy Spirit filled church must first be removed from the earth before the antichrist can reveal himself and come to power. The book of Revelation confirms this.

18) Revelation 17:8 KJV [8] The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

Where is the Rapture confirmed here you may wonder? Okay let's break it down:

The beast that is mentioned here is the antichrist that will soon rule the world. We also know that those who become born again have their names written in the Book of Life. This passage describes the emergence of the antichrist and all people of the world will wonder and marvel at him. But it says that they that dwell on the earth whose names were not written in the Book of Life. So by implication those whose names ARE written in the Book of Life are no longer on the earth... where are they? Raptured!

God couldn't have written about the rapture more plainly than He did in the Book of Revelation, although He might have hidden it in plain sight. Revelation was written by the disciple John who had been exiled to the island of Patmos some sixty years after Jesus was crucified. Here he is visited by Jesus who first dictated the seven letters to the seven churches, before rapturing him up to Heaven where many end times scenarios were revealed to him and he saw many strange things we are only now starting to understand. But one passage makes it plainly clear that the born again church of Jesus Christ will not be here for the final chapter of earth's history but will be 'missing in action.'

19) **Revelation 18:4 KJV** [4] *And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.*

This is a call from Heaven to God's people on earth. Implying that we are called from earth up to Heaven. The plagues refers to the judgements of the seven trumpets, bowls and seals which will be poured out on the earth during the seven year Tribulation period. No other scenario fits this passage than a pre-Tribulation rapture.

The book of Joel is prophetic and speaks of a time when Israel will once again be a nation filled with 'milk and honey' - a time of prosperity for God's people. But it also speaks of the end times. The second coming of Jesus is referred to as the great and terrible day of the Lord. Indeed this will be a great and terrible day. When Jesus returns

20) **Joel 2:31-32 KJV** [31] *The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come. [32] And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.*

But why is Jesus second coming (not rapture) referred to as a great and terrible day? With the absence of the Church after the rapture, during the seven year period known as the Great Tribulation most of the people left alive on the earth will be worshipers of the anti-christ. There will be some Christians during that time who will refuse the anti-christ's 'mark' and will pay dearly for their faith, however for the majority of unbelieving mankind the return of Jesus is going to be horrific in a sense.

This time He comes back as judge and ruler of the earth. He will scorch all evil with fire and end Satan's (the anti-christ) rule over the earth. In fact His return is in response to the invasion of Israel when He will descend with the armies of Heaven and destroy the antichrist and false prophet. It will be a time of great destruction before He begins the restoration of earth to its former 'Garden of Eden' like state.

But those who call on the name of the Lord need not fear for they will be delivered. Strong's concordance gives the meaning of the word deliverance here as 'slippery escape'. We can escape the coming destruction and judgement of the earth at least seven years prior to Jesus second return to earth. Now isn't that good news?

Another rapture verse hidden in plain sight is this one in the book of Revelation. This particular verse is from one of the letters to the seven churches- the church in Philadelphia. A pattern or description of the end time church prior to its rapture? Of the seven churches mentioned in the beginning

chapters of Revelation, Philadelphia is the only one that Jesus has nothing against. In fact He mentions that a door has been opened for this church that no man can shut. Is this the door into Heaven? He goes on to say that this church will miss out on the coming judgement of the whole earth (i.e. the Tribulation):

21) **Revelation 3:10 KJV** [10] *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.*

Once again a pre-Tribulation rapture can be clearly seen here and so the short time we have left should be used wisely for the Kingdom of God, knowing that we could be taken up at any second....

The book of Psalms isn't really a book authored by one person but rather a collection of writings by multiple authors. In fact I think of it more as a collection of poetry. King David penned many of the chapters in which he speaks of his love for God. It's in chapter 27 where we find a hint of the rapture scenario. Of course when we apply it to David's time, he is speaking of how he finds security in God's presence. But if we apply it to the church, to ourselves in this period of world history, we can see how verse 5 speaks of us being hidden in the time of trouble:

22) **Psalms 27:5 KJV** [5] *For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.*

If we search out the meanings of 'he shall set me up' and 'upon a rock', we see the mystery revealed. According to Strong's the meaning of 'he shall set me up' is to be raised, lift up on high and take up. Could this be describing a rapture event?

'Upon a rock' is a clear reference to God and more specifically Jesus. So we can translate it as saying 'In the time of trouble, God will hide me away by taking me up to where Jesus is' ... in Heaven. Sounds like a rapture to me...

"Them's fightin' words" was a common phrase used by Bugs Bunny in the Looney Tunes cartoons. But read the verse below from Psalms and you'll see that they too are fighting words. Our God will not keep silent, He'll use fire to devour and it will be very tempestuous. Strong's gives the definition of 'tempestuous' as to shake in fear, be horribly afraid, to hurl as a storm, come like a whirlwind. So what is this verse referring to? Let's read it...

23) **Psalms 50:3-5 KJV** [3] *Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. [4] He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. [5] Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.*

Revelation 19 describes the second coming of Jesus in a similar light. Jesus will descend on the earth followed by the angelic army of Heaven. It says Jesus will judge and make war. He will smite the nations with the sword of the Word as He treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. As I've said before, this is going to be a terrifying time to be on the earth. But the hope for the born again believer is that we will be on the other side of this time of Tribulation because we would have been removed from the earth beforehand.

'Gather my saints unto Me, those that have made a covenant to Me by sacrifice.' - says exactly that. We will be gathered together in Heaven. This statement further qualifies who exactly will be gathered- those who have made a covenant by sacrifice. Our covenant, that is to say our agreement with God is if we believe in Jesus then He will save us. The sacrifice speaks of Jesus crucified. Here then is further implication of a rapture event soon to take place, this is our Hope for today...

Revelation holds yet another key to unlocking the doctrine of the rapture. It is found in verse twelve, but to understand it fully we need to put the whole chapter into context, however to understand all the imagery used in this chapter warrants a dedicated study, so for the purpose of this one verse know that the 'she' refers to Israel, 'man-child' is Jesus and by implication and association it also refers to the born again church. If we understand that then it becomes immediately apparent that it is talking about the rapture of the church:

24) **Revelation 12:5 KJV** [5] *And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.*

Premature Rapture:

25) **2 Timothy 2:16-18 KJV** [16] *But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. [17] And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; [18] Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.*

Apparently in Paul's day, some of the early Christians believed that the rapture had already taken place. That the doctrine of the rapture was believed by the first generation church is further proof that it is Biblical. However these two individuals- Hymenaeus and Philetus were spreading rumors that the rapture (resurrection) had already taken place, and again the fact that life continued after their claims of a resurrection taking place, means that they (rightly) knew the difference between a rapture and the second coming of Jesus. Their error however was in the timing of the rapture. But note what Paul goes on to say about their ungodly heresy- that it was 'overthrowing the faith of some.' The rapture is an event we should be looking forward to in expectation. The truth is it is yet to take place, but our Hope is that Jesus will rescue his followers from the judgement soon to come. Look up...

"To them that look for Him shall He appear..." that's what the apostle Paul tells us in the book of Hebrews. Surely he must be talking about the rapture not the second coming of Christ. At the second coming the whole world will witness Jesus descending down to earth, literally!! But in the rapture, Jesus will appear only to those who are looking for and expecting Him....

26) **Hebrews 9:28 KJV** [28] *So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*

The following verse from the book of John are the words of Jesus Himself...

27) **John 14:2-3 KJV** [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.*

Here Jesus is saying that after His death, resurrection and ascension into Heaven, that He would return to receive His followers. Again this is a reference to the rapture not His second coming. Why? Because we know according to the book of Revelation and other Old Testament prophecies that when Jesus returns to earth He will destroy the enemy of evil and set up His literal Kingdom on earth where He will rule for 1000 years. Now if there were no rapture event then this verse would in essence be saying that Jesus returns to earth receives the church and they would be where He is... on earth...? But we are already on the earth, so that scenario doesn't make sense. In fact read further down in that chapter and Jesus references Heaven. So what He is really saying is that He will appear to His followers and receive or rapture or remove them from the earth and take them into Heaven to be with Him where He is. Then when He returns at His Second coming He will bring us back down to earth where we will rule and reign with Him for 1000 years and the earth will be transformed back to its Adamic state.... now isn't that a glorious Hope for Today?!

The trap is set. The pungent aroma of the piece of cheese wafts through the stale dark attic. The rat gets a whiff and seeks out the tasty morsel. He is unaware of the danger. His very existence dictated to by his hungry rumbling tummy. He sees the cheese up ahead and makes a dash for it, grabbing it with all his vigour thinking if he could, how easy the treat would satisfy his heart. WHACK!!

This is a picture of many people these days, sadly even some Christians. Running around tending to all the desires of their hearts when just around the corner of time is the rapture followed by the most terrifying time in human history. Like a snare, the cares of life can easily put us off course and steer us to destruction.

28) *Luke 21:34-36 KJV [34] And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. [35] For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. [36] Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.*

These are Jesus own words. The beginning of the chapter starts out by Jesus explaining the end times and how to identify when mankind has reached them. But then He gives a dire warning to his followers not to let the end times (and more specifically the rapture) catch them unawares. Like the rat in the trap. But He also gives us hope: if we watch and pray, we will be accounted (i.e. entirely deserving) worthy to escape the coming calamities on earth. How do we escape??He will appear only to his followers, the door of Heaven will open and He will call us up. We will be taken away, snatched up, translated from this realm to another- where He is, there we will also be. Hallelujah praise God. Jesus is our greatest hope...

The book of Job is somewhat of an obscure book in that no one knows for sure who authored it. But it's the story of a man named Job (Iyov in Hebrew) who was a godly man and very wealthy. But Satan said to God that Job only worshiped Him because he had everything he needed. So God gave Satan permission to take away everything from Job to test his faith. The book tells of how when Job was down and out his three friends came to console him and thus the dialogue unfolds between Job, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar. In chapter 11 Zophar offers Job some advice wherein he also offers us another Rapture clue.

29) *Job 11:20 KJV [20] But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.*

This verse by saying the wicked shall not escape implies that the righteous *will* escape. Again the hope of the wicked is only death (giving up of the ghost) implying the hope of the righteous is life. The followers of Jesus will escape the coming Tribulation and enter into the heavenly realm to be with Jesus 'where He is.'

Psalm 90 is a prayer by Moses to God. Here he speaks about the insignificance of man compared to the Almighty. How the days of our lives are quickly lived and soon we die. He compares our short lives on earth to a sleep in the night and like grass that shoots up and is soon cut down. In the following verse Moses outlines the God-given lifespan of man, but in the last sentence he puts in a quip that seems almost out of place. Could it be he is giving us a clue for the end times when the 'lifespan of Christ followers comes to an end on earth?

30) *Psalm 90:10 KJV [10] The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.*

We fly away? Why use this terminology? Why didn't Moses just say 'we die'? I like to think he's giving us another clue to the great hope - the rapture

The book of Titus is one of the shortest in the New Testament, in fact it's more of a letter, written by the Apostle Paul to Titus. In it he outlines certain guidelines for the church and how they should be living. Towards the end of the second chapter he tells us that we should deny the ungodly way of living, to live soberly and righteous. In doing so, we should be 'looking ' for 'that blessed hope.' What is the blessed hope?

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

The blessed hope IS the appearing of Jesus Christ, not at His second coming but rather when He appears to believers ONLY in the rapture. Jesus second coming on the other hand is not referred to as the blessed hope or appearing but it is known as the great and terrible day of our Lord. When Jesus returns to earth the whole world will see him and tremble in fear because He will come in judgement to rule the world. But in the rapture He appears, to the believers only, and takes them [us] up into Heaven for a seven year feast and marriage super. As the bride of Christ, this is the churches Blessed Hope.

Within a few decades after the death and resurrection of Jesus the early church had already begun to see heresies creep in, involving forms of mysticism, so-called secret knowledge and the worship of angels. Paul wrote to the church in Colosse telling them of the sufficiency of Christ and how they ought rather to be living. His advice is that they should not be seeking out any other way but Christ for when we choose to follow Jesus we become dead to the flesh and alive in the spirit. And soon we will leave our earthly estate for the heavenly one:

32) *Colossians 3:1-4 KJV [1] If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. [2] Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. [3] For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. [4] When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.*

When will Christ appear? When He calls up His Church at the rapture. When He appears (manifests Himself) then all Christians past and living will also be manifested in our renewed bodies, with Him in the air and He will take us home.

We know this is referring to the rapture and not His second coming because if we continue reading we see what happens to those who are not Christ's...

33) **Colossians 3:5-6 KJV** [5] *Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: [6] For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:*

The wrath of God will come upon the children of disobedience- this is the seven year Tribulation period which begins after the rapture. A period of such horrific terror that the Bible says if God did not shorten those days, no people would survive. In other words an extinction level event. But we who are in Christ need not fear as we see the day approaching, for our hope for today is in the soon return of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The book of Jude seemingly fits snugly just before Revelation and is a description and warning of the end time church at large. This is the apostasy that will creep into Christianity in the last days where all sorts of doctrinal heresy will be preached from the pulpits. But Jude, who was the brother of James, also speaks of a time when Christ will come again to judge the inhabitants of the earth.

34) **Jude 1:14 KJV** [14] *And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, [15] To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.*

When Jesus appears at the rapture it is for His church, but when He comes to earth the second time it is with His church. If there were no rapture before the second coming of Jesus then who are the tens of thousands of saints coming with Him as mentioned here? It's clear, first the rapture (which includes those believers still alive as well as those who have died) then the second coming. Two separate events at least seven years apart.

There you have it, more than enough conclusive Biblical proof that the rapture will take place before the Tribulation period which is soon coming. How do we know it is soon? Jesus gave us a "heads-up"...

35) **Matthew 24:3-14 KJV** [3] *And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? [4] And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. [5] For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. [6] And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. [7] For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. [8] All these are the beginning of sorrows. [9] Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. [10] And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. [11] And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. [12] And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. [13] But he that shall*

endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. [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.

By looking at what's going on around the world today we can see that we are in the stage Jesus described as the beginning of sorrows. Wars and rumors of war: Russia Ukraine war is a big one that will have a far reaching global effect. There's much concern that the shortage of grain (Ukraine being one of the largest producers of wheat) will cause a famine especially in Africa. We hear of rumors of war with China and Taiwan and North Korea also making a lot of noise. Pestilence has been with us globally for almost 3 years now (Covid19) and there are sure to be more outbreaks of diseases in the near future. Earthquakes and volcanoes are becoming more intense. In the last few months we have had two major volcanoes, one in Spain that swallowed up an entire town and another in Hawaii that was equally devastating. There are many other current events that confirm we are at the end of this age and we'll look at those next. But just remember if you are born again then you have Hope for Today in Jesus Christ.