Home / Article / Establishing the reasons for the Pre-Tribulation Rapture

Establishing the reasons for the Pre-Tribulation Rapture

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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. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 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. 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: 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. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

The Rapture of the Church has become a controversial subject in the church today and yet the very first epistle that the apostle Paul wrote was the epistle to the Thessalonians dealing with this very subject. In the other epistles such as Romans and Galatians, Paul deals with doctrinal issues such as justification by faith, law and grace, new creation realities and other great doctrines but in his first epistle he deals with the coming of the Lord - specifically with the mystery of the Rapture.

Those who are Anti- Rapture contend that the word *rapture* is not found in the Bible and discredit the doctrine of The Rapture. The truth is the word ***rapture*** is found in the Bible. It is found in the **Latin Vulgate** which was the standard Bible that people used for 1200 years before the **King James Bible** came along in the 1600 (400AD -1611AD). The words of Paul, '**caught up**' is **rapiemur** in the Latin Vulgate meaning sudden snatching and caught up. In the Greek Bible, the word is ***harpazo*** and it means the same thing as rapture, caught up or snatched away. If you have a problem with the word rapture then call it,

- **The catching away of the church**
- **The Harpazo**
- **Caught up**
- **The imminent return of the Lord**

You can call it whatever you want but the believer must understand that the doctrine of The Rapture is unquestionably a Bible doctrine. It is just as bona fide as the doctrine of justification by faith. The Anti-Rapturist says that this is an escape mentality labeling it as the great escape. That is exactly what it is! **The Rapture is the Great Escape from the Great Tribulation known also as the wrath of God.** In simple terms, The Rapture is when the believing will be leaving. On God's prophetic calendar, The Rapture is the very next event. It will be the closing of the Church Age. The Rapture was a mystery that God revealed to the apostle Paul as he revealed it to the Corinthians,

> THE RAPTURE IS THE GREAT ESCAPE FROM THE GREAT TRIBULATION KNOWN ALSO AS THE WRATH OF GOD.

WHAT IS THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH

Behold, I shew 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 trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 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. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be *to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

1 Corinthians 15:51-57

The word ***mystery*** here does not have the same connotation as it does in our modern world. In today's vernacular a mystery is something hidden, an unsolved problem and an enigma that cannot be worked out. The word mystery in the Scriptures is **musterion** meaning knowledge withheld from the ungodly but revealed to the godly. So let me give you a few things to grasp about The Rapture,

1 THE RAPTURE IS A MYSTERY RESERVED FOR THE SAINTS

Behold, I shew 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 trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 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. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:51-57

2 THE RAPTURE IS JESUS COMING TO RECEIVE THE BELIEVERS UNTO HIMSELF

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 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. 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.

John 14:1-3

3 THE RAPTURE IS THE CHANGE OF YOUR BODY

For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

Philippians 3:20, 21

4 THE RAPTURE IS THE CHANGE FROM CORRUPTIBLE TO INCORRUPTIBLE, FROM MORTAL TO IMMORTAL

Behold, I shew 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 trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 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. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:51-57

5 THE RAPTURE IS THE DAY OF REDEMPTION

And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

Ephesians 4:30

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

Romans 8:18-25

THE RAPTURE IS THE DAY WHEN THE BELIEVING WILL BE LEAVING

WHAT SHOULD THE BELIEVER'S ATTITUDE BE IN THE MEANTIME?

1. We are to WATCH for His Coming - we are not looking for the Tribulation nor for the antichrist! (Luke 12:37-40, Mark 13:33-37, Revelation 3:3, 16:15, 1Thessalonians 5:6).
2. We are to WAIT expectantly for His Coming and the Rapture (Hebrews 9:28, 1 Thessalonians 9:10, Philippians 3:20,21, 1Corinthians 1:7,8)
3. We are to LOOK for His Coming, our Blessed Hope. (Titus2:13)

REASONS FOR PRE-TRIBULATION RAPTURE

Perusing through the Scriptures we discover that the Rapture is

- Comfort
- Blessed Hope
- Mystery
- Great Escape

It would not be so if it was not a Pre-Tribulation Rapture. So let us look at some more reasons for the Pre-Tribulation Rapture Doctrine. We have to established these reasons firm in our minds because there are many thoughts on the rapture and anti rapture concepts within the church.

1 DELIVERANCE FROM WRATH.

The Great Tribulation is called God's wrath. As born again believers we have been redeemed from the wrath to come. (1 Thessalonians 1:10, Revelation 3:10)

2 THE TRIBULATION PERIOD IS CALLED JACOB'S TROUBLE.

It is God's dealing with Israel and it has absolutely nothing to do with the church. The tribulation is God dealing with Israel and the nations for seven years and the reason it is called Jacob's trouble and is seven years is because of Daniel's **70th week** prophecy and Jacob had trouble with Laban for 7 years segments.

3 THE CHURCH HAD NO PART IN THE FIRST 69 WEEKS OF DANIEL'S 70 WEEKS PROPHECY.

Any student of the bible and prophecy knows that Daniel's 70 weeks prophecy of which 69 had nothing to do with the church and therefore the last week remaining being a period of 7 years is God's dealing with Israel. It has nothing to do with the church.

4 THE 'IMMINENT RETURN' ISSUE

It is only the pre-tribulation rapture concept that allows for the the imminent return of the Lord in the rapture. This simply means that he can come at any moment and as a thief in the night.

5 THE SEVEN FEASTS OF THE LORD CLEARLY REVEAL THE RAPTURE **(HARPAZO)** BEFORE THE SECOND COMING

1. **Passover — The Crucifixion of Jesus**
2. **Feast of Unleavened Bread — The Sinless Life of Jesus**
3. **Feast of FirstFruits — The Resurrection of Jesus**
4. **Feast of Pentecost - Coming of the Holy Spirit and the empowerment of the church**
5. **Feat of Trumpets — The Rapture**
6. **Day of Atonement - The Second Coming**
7. **Feast of Tabernacles — The Millennium**

Through these feasts, God forecasted

- **The entire plan of God in regards to man's lease upon the earth**
- **The redemptive work of the Suffering Messiah in his first coming,**
- **The beginning and the closing of the church age**
- **The rapture of the church**
- **His dealings with Israel and the other nations**
- **His second coming as the all conquering Military Messiah and judgment of the nations**
- **The millennial reign**

Let us now look briefly at the feasts and how they apply to our lives

- **The Feast of Passover . - Jesus dying as the sacrificial Passover lamb - Death**
- **The Feast of unleavened bread - Jesus is buried and the bread portrays the perfect sinless body - Burial**
- **The Feast of Firstfruits - Jesus is raised and is the firstborn or firstfruits from the dead - Resurrection**
- **The Feast of Pentecost - Jesus empowers the church with the Holy Spirit and the beginning of the church age - Spiritual Empowerment**

The first four feasts mentioned above are also known as the Spring feasts because they occur in the Spring. They have already been fulfilled. Jesus fulfilled them and we are now living within the Feast of Pentecost on the way to the fulfillment of the next three feasts which are known as the Fall feasts. Here are the Fall feasts that are yet to be fulfilled and they will be fulfilled,

- **The Feast of Trumpet - The catching away of the church and the closing of the church**

age prior to the Tribulation - Rapture

- **The Feast of Atonement - The physical and visible return of Jesus to the earth on the Mount of Olives to deliver Israel and deal with the nations - Second Coming**
- **The Feast of Tabernacle - The physical reign of Jesus on the earth from his headquarters in Jerusalem for a thousand years after throwing Satan into the bottomless pit - Millennial Reign**

Right now we are living between the Feast of Pentecost and the Feast of Trumpet. If Pentecost falls in the Spring and the Feast of Trumpet is in the Fall that would mean that we are now currently living in Summer. What are we to do in the Summertime?

He that gathereth in summer is a wise son: but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame.

Proverbs 10:5

The Summer is a time for the gathering or reaping of the Harvest. The Summer is the time of the church age which began on the day of Pentecost and will come to a close at the Feast of Trumpet. We are now living in harvest time and we have been empowered by the Holy Spirit not just to sit cozily in church clapping our hands and singing Kumbaya. Jesus said, '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 Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.' (Acts 1:8) The coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was to empower us and enable us to be witnesses with power. We ought to heed to the warning in Proverbs, 'He that gathereth in summer is a wise son: but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame.' and also look to the wisdom of the ant,

Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?

Proverbs 10:6-9

We ought to be busy like the ant and gather the harvest while we are in Summer. The harvest is a harvest of souls for Jesus. Every born again believer is mandated to be a soul winner.

6 NO PROPHECIES NEED TO BE FULFILLED BEFORE THE RAPTURE CAN TAKE PLACE WHEREAS THE SECOND COMING NECESSITATES FULFILLMENT OF CERTAIN SPECIFIC PROPHECIES.

Because of the Imminent return of the Lord, there are no prophecies in the way of the Rapture whereas the Second Coming needs the fulfillment of

- Seven year peace treaty which will be broken half way through
- Building of the third Jewish temple
- Revelation of the Antichrist
- The Temple desecrated by the Antichrist
- The two witnesses and the death and resurrection and more prophecies...

7 GOD'S TRACK RECORD OF DELIVERING THE RIGHTEOUS FROM JUDGMENT

1. Noah
2. Lot
3. Rahab

For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;) The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations...

2 Peter 2:4-9

A few words about Glenn

Dr Glenn Arekion is a gifted teacher and a conference speaker, conveying the Word of truth in a simple yet dynamic and motivational way. Glenn was born in Mauritius but was raised in London, England and now resides in the USA.

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