

21T07e The Great Escape (PreTrib Rapture) Part 5

Hello my friends. Thanks for joining me at the PUNLA Coffee Table. Get your coffee or tea, and Get comfortable so we can talk. If anything I say gives you wisdom, then its from God. All the nonsense is from me. I'm not claiming any special revelation. I just want to share my thoughts on the topic.

Today we are finishing our discussion of the Great Escape or the doctrine of the PreTrib Rapture doctrine. And why this doctrine troubles me.

Just to recap My first 7 reasons where,

- [#1 This doctrine makes me Very Sad](#) because if we are gone prior to the tribulation, who will be shepherding the new believers that come during the tribulation.
- [#2 Why is the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ in the Bible?](#) If the Church is gone prior to the tribulation what is the purpose for the book of Revelation being an encouragement to the church
- [#3 How many second comings are there?](#) I believe in one 2nd coming but the PreTrib rapture requires Jesus to come twice, at the rapture before the Tribulation and for His triumphant return.
- [#4 How many mass resurrections will there be?](#) I believe in a First Resurrection for Believers to Glory and Second resurrection for non-believers to judgment. Pre-Trib Rapture doctrine requires another resurrection for the rapture prior to the First Resurrection of Revelation 20.
- [#5 Who are the Revelation Martyrs.?](#) These must be Believers but if we are raptured where do they come from and how do they get such strong faith to be martyred.
- [#6 What is the origin of PreTrib Rapture doctrine?](#) PreTrib Rapture doctrine and dispensationalism appears to be a modern concept not a teaching that can be traced back to early church fathers.
- [#7 The PreTrib Rapture doctrine appears to be a Western concept.](#) The concept of the Great Escape is not encouraging to Christians already facing tribulation and dying for Christ.

So let's pick up our conversation with my last reason I don't believe the Great Escape doctrine.

My Reason #8. The Rapture Scriptures. There are 4 primary scriptures on the Rapture Matthew 24:29-31; I Corinthians 15:50-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12;

We looked at the Matthew 24 and 1 Corinthians 15 verses in Part 4. Today let's finish by looking at 1 & 2 Thessalonians.

Next let's read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (NKJV) *[13But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.](#)* Remember in these verses Paul is using "Sleep" as a metaphor for "death." Someone who has fallen asleep means someone who has died.

Let's continue *[15For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.](#)* Paul is telling us that believers who are dead already will be resurrected first before we who are still alive receive our heavenly bodies.

¹⁶For the Lord Himself will **descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God.** And the dead in Christ will rise first. Paul is telling how Jesus will come. It sounds like a major event that no one will miss. He will descend with a “shout”, “archangel voice”, “trumpet of God”. There appears to be a parallel to this in Revelation 19:11-17 (NKJV) which is the second coming of Christ ¹¹Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. ¹²His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. ¹³He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. ¹⁵Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. ¹⁷Then I saw **an angel** standing in the sun; and **he cried with a loud voice**, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, “Come and gather together for the supper of the great God,

So I'll leave it to you to be evaluated but here in Revelation is the triumphant 2nd coming of Christ. And I believe Paul is referencing the same triumphant event which is announced by a shout, an angel voice, and a trumpet.

Let's continue with 1 Thessalonians 4:17 ¹⁷Then we who are alive and remain **shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.** ¹⁸Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Now verse 17 is definitely the rapture. Rapture means to be caught up. But when does it take place? I just read Paul's letter in conjunction with the words of Jesus in Matthew and Revelation. I believe Paul is talking about the same triumphant 2nd coming of Christ.

Next let's read 2 Thessalonians 2:1–12 (NKJV) but before we start let's understand Paul's purpose in writing. Most study bibles title this section “The Great Apostasy” or “Great Falling Away”. Paul is not intending to focus on the rapture in this text. Let's read ¹Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and **our gathering together to Him**, we ask you, ²not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. Again Paul is referring to our gathering or the rapture here, even though rapture terminology is not used in these verses. But we need to assume the Thessalonians have read 1 Thessalonians before this. Let's continue with v3,

³Let no one deceive you by any means; for **that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition**, Paul is laying out a timeline again. Paul says don't be deceived, that day will come after the man of sin is revealed and “the falling away”. That day has to refer to the gathering of v.1 or the rapture but if the man of sin is revealed first, then the tribulation will have already started. Let's continue with v.4

⁴who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. ⁵Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? ⁶And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. ⁷For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. ⁸And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will **consume with the breath of His mouth** and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

In verse 8, Paul is making reference to the triumphant 2nd coming when Jesus' very word will defeat the forces of darkness. In Revelation the metaphor used is "from His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword". Let's continue with v9-12

*⁹The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, ¹⁰and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. ¹¹And for this reason God will **send them strong delusion**, that they should believe the lie, ¹²that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*

v.11 is another reference to the deceptions people will have at the end times. And God will give them "Strong Delusion" so they will continue to believe the lie they have been believing.

And I'll suggest we should look an additional couple scriptures at least. Revelation 1:7 (NKJV) *⁷Behold, He is coming with clouds, and **every eye will see Him**, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.*

Now Revelation 1 is definitely talking about the 2nd coming of Jesus and that everyone on earth will know and mourn. This is Jesus' triumphant return to earth.

I'm going to conclude with Revelation 22:18-19 (NKJV). This is a very solemn warning that Jesus ends the book of Revelation with.

*¹⁸For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: **if anyone adds to these things**, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; ¹⁹and **if anyone takes away from the words** of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*

We need to take Jesus' warning seriously. These are very grave consequences. I for one, want to make sure I revere the Jesus' words in His Revelation. I don't want to teach anything that might conflict with the message of Revelation. Jesus meant Revelation to be an encouragement to the church. He wanted us to be prepared for trouble and the coming tribulations. Revelation and the Gospels are messages of preparation and engagement, not escape.

So, I'm not trying to sway your opinions. Like I said this is not about Salvation or Living in the Kingdom of God. It is truly a gray-area and not worth fighting about. But while I was in the hospital having my conversations with God. I felt so very saddened when I thought about this doctrine of the PreTrib Rapture. I felt sad because it does not appear to be in line with what Jesus is trying to have us do and learn in the bible. I'm willing to die for Christ and I know new believers faced by trials need other more mature believers to help them or the world will eat them up (Ref. Parable of Sower in Matt. 13:3-9). We need shepherds, friends and community to strengthen us against this world as we follow Christ. You cannot follow sitting down. Being a Follower of Christ is work. Follow is an action word and requires us to do something or we are not following. It's not just a mental exercise. It's an action.

I fear this theology and others like it encourage Christians to be complacent. Don't rock the boat so to speak. Don't engage and God will protect us from harm. And in the end we will be Part of the Great

Escape from trials and tribulations. And what if The Great Tribulation comes and the Great Escape doesn't. Are we preparing Christians for the troubles and trials and persecution which is coming or are we preparing them to fail the tests at the end? If the Great Escape happens great, but we still should be focused on preparation and engagement until the end, NOT a rescue from troubles.

This is just my opinion but to me right or wrong, this seems like a doctrine that does not help to build Christians. It does not help me to follow Christ and do what he asks. It does not encourage me to engage the world in ways that might result in my loss of comfort or even my loss of life, liberty or freedoms. Just think about it. I'm not saying I'm right or wrong. Only what should be our focus, this or what Christ wants us to do. I leave it up to you.

Let me close with a prayer.

Lord God thank you for your revelation to encourage us to be prepared and engage. I know only you know the truth about these future events. I trust you Lord. I pray for those that teach and myself, may we not use ideas or hypothesis that violate your warning in Revelation.

Merciful father, guide my words and speech to be in line with your will and your words. May my words be from you father. And I pray all these things to the Father in your name Jesus. Amen.

I'm going to share some LINKS with you, below this video or on our website,

Before The Wrath (Official Full Trailer) https://youtu.be/h1irWOiD_Ac
"A Galilean Wedding: Picture of the End of the World" <https://youtu.be/JbO-BvyRVDU>
MercyMe - I Can Only Imagine (Official Music Video) https://youtu.be/N_lrrq_opng

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See you next time at the PUNLA Coffee Table. God bless.