

The Day of the Lord
The Rapture, Part 2
1 Thessalonians 4.13-18

[Last week we started to examine the Scriptural case for the Rapture as it is revealed in our current text and the New Testament. As we studied what the Word of God had to say about the rapture we discovered,]

[The various positions concerning the Rapture which include,]

- [The Mid Tribulation Rapture Theory]
- [The Post Tribulation Rapture]
- [The Preterist and A-Millennialist]
- [The Pre Tribulation Rapture Theory – This is the Biblical position and ours.]

[We then looked at,]

- [The Theology of the Rapture – The Rapture is undeniably contained in the Word of God.]
- [The Terror of the Rapture – For the lost they will be left to endure the Great Tribulation Period.]
- [The Triumph of the Rapture – For the Born Again the Rapture will be a great victory and everlasting joy.]

Today we continue our Study of the Rapture in the Word of God.

A. The Timing of the Rapture (2 Thess 2.1-12)

2 Thess 2.3

1. **The Saints Reunion (2 Thess 2.1; 1 Thess 4.16-18)** [- *Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,* - Now, we know that the Word Rapture never appears in Scripture in the English Bible; because it is a **Latin** word so it does appear in the Latin Bible. But the meaning of the word often appears.]

- [Rapture – To be carried away or taken out. In a traditional Christian sense it is the carrying away or removal of the Church from this world. In an accurate Biblical or theological sense it is the removal of the Holy Spirit, or the restrainer, from this world which requires the necessary removal of every Christian from this world as well.]

[What the Rapture is Really All About - I believe that many of the misunderstanding concerning the rapture and its timing are based on wrong presuppositions concerning what the rapture really is and means. The rapture is removal of God's restraint from this World. When God removes the Holy Spirit and His supernatural restraint from this World then God is essentially turning mankind over to his choices, namely the rejection of God, the rejection of God's mercy, and the rejection of God's Grace. In essence God is going to say, "You want things your own way, you don't want me (God) to be in your life and world, well then, there you go, have it your way (Burger King living)." With the removal of God's goodness Satan is fully released upon mankind, and mankind will now, for the first time ever, receive the full consequences of their choice to reject God.]

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- A. The Timing of the Rapture
1. The Saints Reunion

[For the Born Again Christian the rapture means that God's children, those who have accepted the gift God provided through our Lord Jesus Christ, will be eternally gathered together into His physical presence. The Churches hope throughout the ages will be fully realized. The Bible states,]

[1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 ¹⁶ For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet 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. ¹⁸ Wherefore comfort one another with these words.]

[Clearly, the coming of the Lord referred to in our text points to the second advent of our Lord which will be when our Lord returns physically to this earth at the end of the tribulation period and at the beginning of the Millennium. Our gathering together unto Him points to our meeting with

our Lord in the Clouds, or in the air as described in 1 Thess 4.13-18 (just read) and 1 Cor 15.51-58 which we will look at in few moments.]

2. **Satan's Release** (2 Thess 2.3-6; Matt 24.24) [- *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.***

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Matt 24.24

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. – Clearly this text refers to none other than the anti-christ, as we Christians call him, but the world will call him Christ. He will be a great deceiver, so crafty in his deception that Jesus said,]*

*[Matthew 24:24*²⁴ *For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.]*

[What keeps Christian's from being deceived during this Church age? The Holy Spirit within us protects us, if we hear Him. What will keep Christian's from being deceived during the Tribulation Period, by the master deceiver himself? We won't be here, we will be with the Lord.]

[Is the anti-christ alive today? – Since Satan is not omniscient and does not know when the rapture will occur and when the Tribulation will begin, then the devil must have an anti-christ ready at all times. It is probable that he has many who would qualify always ready, just in case one doesn't work out, this helps us to understand the frequent references to many anti-christ's in the New Testament and the phrase that begins verse 7 of our text, *For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: . . .]*

3. **The Spirit's Removal** (2 Thess 2.7-10; John 16.7-11; cf. John 14.16-18; Heb 13.5) [- *For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: **only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.***⁸ ***And then shall that Wicked be revealed,** whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:*⁹ *Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and*

lying wonders, ¹⁰ And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. - The Holy Spirit will never leave a child of God. God, who cannot lie, promised to give His Holy Spirit to those that are His and promised that they would always know His blessed presence. The presence of the Holy Spirit is a restraining presence in our world in numerous ways. The most obvious includes:]

John 16.7

- a. [**The Holy Spirit's spiritual conviction** – The Holy Spirit himself continuously pricks at the hearts of lost men seeking to bring them to a point where they will realize their desperate need and accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. The Bible states,]

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[John 16:7-11 ⁷ Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. ⁸ And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: ⁹ Of sin, because they believe not on me; ¹⁰ Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; ¹¹ Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.]

John 14.15

- b. [**The Holy Spirit's Compulsion within Christians** – The presence of the Holy Spirit within Christians drives them to share the love and salvation of God with all of those around them. Born Again Christians have come into the love of God which is unlike any other love. As a result they find themselves compelled to tell others about their incredible Heavenly Father.]

[Now our Lord Jesus Christ has promised that born again Christians will receive and never ever be without the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. Notice in the Word of God,]

[John 14:15-17 ¹⁵ If ye love me, keep my commandments. ¹⁶ And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; ¹⁷ Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.]

2 Thess 2.10

[A born again Christian will never ever be without the Holy Spirit, but during the Tribulation Period the Holy Spirit is removed in a great way from this world; therefore, born again Christians MUST BE taken out with Him, which is clearly the Rapture.]

[Hence, the only way that Satan will be able to do what he must do during the tribulation period is for the Holy Spirit and those who know His intimate influence to be removed from this world. Why would God allow this to happen?]

[2 Thessalonians 2:10 . . . because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.]

[Because people demand to have things their way. It will be the result of peoples lost and rebellious choices.]

Important

[The Clear Scriptural Timing of the Rapture – The Word of God, in this text clearly indicates that the Tribulation Period cannot begin until the Holy Spirit's restraint is removed from this world and is taken out of the way, and the Church and all born again believers must be removed with Him. The Rapture MUST occur before the Tribulation Period can begin.]

4. **The Sinner's Rebellion** (vs 11-12; 2 Cor 6.2) [-
*And for this cause God shall send them **strong delusion**, that they should believe a lie:*¹² *That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.* –
Some of you look smugly upon the rapture and the sermon I am preaching right now, but watch out for the choice you make right now may be more important than you could ever know.]

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[These two verses reveal that all who have clearly heard the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ before the Rapture and have chosen to reject the Lord Jesus Christ will have no opportunity to receive Him as their Savior after the Rapture takes place.]

[Notice in these verses (vs 11),]

- [**Strong** - *energeia* (gk) - 1) working, efficiency. 1a) in the NT used only of **superhuman power**, whether of God or of the Devil]
- [**Delusion** - *plane plan'-ay* (gk) - 1) a wandering, a straying about. 1a) one led astray from the right way, roams hither and thither. 2) metaph. 2a) mental straying.]

[Hence those who make a clear choice to reject the Lord Jesus Christ before the rapture and survive until after the rapture will find that the dispensation of grace has passed and no other opportunity will be afforded them. They made their choice. Yes, many people will be saved during the Tribulation Period, but none of them will be those who purposefully rejected Christ before the rapture of the Church.]

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[What is your choice concerning the Lord Jesus Christ and the grace of God today?]

[This is the most important choice of your life!]

[If the Rapture were to occur latter today, and you refused to respond to the invitation of the Holy Spirit of God to be saved, then you will be lost and condemned for all eternity to come.]

[On the other hand if you respond then,]

- [You will instantly be adopted in God's eternal family, having been born-again.]
- [You are promised as a born again believer to enjoy the supernatural event of the Rapture.]
- [You are promised to be rescued from the Great Tribulation Period.]
- [You are Promised to enjoy the glory and wonder of a fully transformed and immortal life with our Lord Jesus Christ for all eternity to come.]

[This is the reality of the revealing Word of God!]

[2 Cor. 6:2 (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)]

CrossRoads Baptist Church, July 31, 2016

Next Week

- The Transformation of the Rapture
- The Trust of the Rapture - Comfort one another. Our hope for the future.

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