

03b REV

Let's pick up our study now. We are looking specifically at the subject of the timing of the rapture and what the biblical evidence seems to tell us. As I mentioned before, there are not necessarily any definitive, clinching, proof texts where you can just go and it says, well, look, right here, it says the tribulation will happen seven years before the second coming.

Hence, the differences of opinion, differences of understanding down through the centuries of the Christian era. There are people who think that there is but one coming and that it is the second coming and that the church will go through the tribulation period and that the warnings that Jesus gives in Matthew 24 and so on are to be taken to heart by the members of the church who will be present on earth at that time. One of the clearest distinctions, by the way, which we are not going to study tonight because I think it is pretty well known, between the rapture and the second coming in terms of how they are described is the dead in Christ rise and we who are alive and remain meet them in the air.

Jesus returns for the church in the air. It is clear, without any doubt, that the second coming, the second advent, when Jesus returns to set up his throne, he does not meet anybody in the air. He comes down and plants his feet on the Mount of Olives.

It splits and he walks down into Jerusalem and sits on the throne of his father David. The two cannot be reconciled. They are two separate and distinct things.

Let me direct your attention, by way of contrast with the second coming, to John chapter 14. Let not your heart be troubled. Remember that in John you have a clear line of demarcation between Jesus teaching to his disciples about their current time and their current age and in the upper room, once Judas walks out, Jesus changes his tone, changes his frame of reference.

He says, I no longer call you servants, I call you friends. And he starts talking about things to come which include, and direct attention toward, the church age. John chapter 14 is in that section after Judas leaves.

It is in chapter 13 where he gets up and walks out. What does he say? Let not your heart be troubled. Now, if I thought I was going through all or any part of the tribulation, my heart would be troubled.

It is the time of trouble. And if you are not troubled in a time of trouble, there is something the matter with you. You are on something.

It is a time of trouble. People are crying out, let the rocks fall on me, flee, don't grab your coat. It is a time of trouble.

And people who are in that time, it is a time of darkness. It is a time of night. And it is a time of trouble.

Jesus says, don't let your heart be troubled. If you believe in God, believe 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. If I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am there you may be also.

Now, I will come again and receive you to myself. He does not say, I will come back and join you on earth. Here does he.

I will receive you to myself. The movement here is of the people to whom he speaks to Jesus. Jesus does not come to the people.

The people come to him. I will receive you to myself, that where I am, there you may be also. This, by the way, is the situation you see in John's Revelation, chapter 4 and following.

The voice, like a trumpet, says, come up here and I will show you what is to take place. The voice is the voice of the Lord Jesus, which is described in the Revelation as being like a trumpet. Come up here.

What does he see? The throne, the one who sits on the throne, the one who surrounds the throne, and ultimately he is going to see the Lamb in the midst of the throne with the scroll in his hand. That is what you have in chapter 5. Where I am, there you will be also. So, if I go and prepare a place for you, I am going away from the earth to prepare a place for you.

The place for you is not on the earth. The place for you is where Jesus is going. Where does he go? Up and away at the ascension.

I am going away and preparing a place for you. So, there is a clear indication here that what Jesus is talking about, I will come again and receive you to myself, this is the rapture. And this is talking predictably and for the first time about mystery doctrine, about the truths pertaining to the church age.

This is not the second coming. I will return and sit on the throne of my father David, and you will be pillars in my temple. That is not what he is talking about.

So, before that takes place, before he comes to the earth, before the day of wrath, before the tribulation, I will come and receive you to myself. Your heart should not be troubled. I am going away.

I am coming back. Preparing a place for you. I am going to come get you.

You will be with me. This is what Jesus gives him in John chapter 14. There is no hint that after you have suffered a while, I will come get you.

Right? Your heart should not be troubled. Where I am going you know and the way you know. Thomas says, Lord, we don't know where you are going.

How can we know the way? He says, I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. Where is he going? To the Father.

What does he tell Mary in the garden? I have not yet ascended. Where? To my Father. Who do we see in heaven? Sitting on the throne? The Father.

Where is the Lamb? Right hand of the Father. Where do the saints show up in Revelation 7? Surrounding the throne. I am going to the Father.

I am preparing a place for you. In the realms and vicinity of the Father. We are not going to live in the third heaven.

We are not going to live in God's throne room. But we are going to be up there. And at the appropriate time we show up and have a formation.

And that is what you see in Revelation 7. So, John 14 is instructive in this regard. Let's take a look at Matthew chapter 24. We want to look at this and at the evidence in Revelation for the timing of the rapture.

Jesus in chapter 24 departed from the temple. His disciples came up to show him the buildings of the temple. Jesus said, Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another that shall not be thrown down.

That was literally fulfilled in 70 A.D. The legions of Titus come in. The whole thing is knocked down. And it has been that way ever since.

There is not one stone on another on the temple mount that remains of the second temple that existed in Jesus' day. As he sat on the mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately saying, Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age? Jesus answered and said to them, Take heed that no one deceives you. Many will come in my name, saying, I am the Christ, and will deceive many.

There are two ways to understand that statement. Either people are going to come and hear Sam walking down saying, I am the Christ. Sam says he is the Christ.

Or, many will come in my name saying, I, Jesus, am the Christ. Affirming my identity as the Christ, and yet are going to deceive many. I take the latter.

I don't think it is going to be false Christs. That happened at the first advent. There were

a lot of other people running around.

They could read Daniel. They knew that the time was near when Messiah was supposed to show up. And there were several, even in Roman history.

You have others that claim to be the Messiah. You have them mentioned in the New Testament. Take heed that no one deceives you.

Many will come in my name, saying, and you have single quotes around that. I am the Christ. In my view, you should scribble out those single quotes.

Jesus is saying, there are going to be people who come and say that I am the Messiah, and will deceive many. They will affirm Jesus, but they are going to lead people down the path. You will hear of wars and rumors of wars.

See that you are not troubled. For all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.

And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you.

And you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. Now, we just got through reading John 14, and it was a whole different kettle of fish over there. Do not let your heart be troubled.

If somebody told me, well, you are going to be delivered up and put in prison and before kings, and you will be hated by all nations, etc., etc. He says right here, they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you. He does not say, but let not your heart be troubled.

You know, it is no big deal. It is the same audience, two different messages. Why? Here in Matthew 24, we are in the age of Israel, and he is speaking to you, Israel.

Upper Room, John 14, we are in the time after Judas leaves the room, and he says, now let me tell you about the church age. And he is talking to church. Let not your heart be troubled.

I go to prepare a place for you, church. I will come again and receive you, church, to myself, that where I am, there you, the church, may be also. That is not what is said here to his disciples, who here represent the listening audience for Israel.

In the Upper Room, these same men are going to represent the listening audience for the church. They are actually going to be in neither place, are they? Are Peter, James, and John going to be either in the living generation that sees the rapture take place, or the living generation that goes through the tribulation? Well, maybe I should rephrase that. Are Andrew, Thaddeus, Bartholomew? Because, as you know, in my view, it could well be James and John who are the two witnesses, and they actually may see some of

the tribulation.

So I have to retract a little of that. Anyway, this is what we have in Matthew 24. All these are the beginning of sorrows.

Verse 9, they will deliver you up to tribulation, kill you, hate at all nations by namesake. Many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Many false prophets will rise up and deceive many, because lawlessness will abound.

Why will lawlessness abound? What did Paul say in Thessalonians? That which hinders is taken out of the way. The man of sin, the man of lawlessness, is revealed. The spirit of lawlessness, Paul says in Thessalonians, is already at work.

Lawlessness is going to be rife. It will abound. The love of many will grow cold.

But he who endures to the end will be delivered. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations. And then the end will come.

Therefore, when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place, whoever reads, let him understand. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Well, what about everybody else? Where will the 144,000 be located? Where are those who come to faith going to be located? What is my suggestion to you about God's predestination of the birthplace and location of Old Testament believers? I have suggested to you time and again that God saved himself some trouble of having to try to launch tablets across several thousand miles from Israel into China or Aborigines in Australia or the southern tip of Africa or South America by conveniently locating those he knew would be positive and interested in Israel.

All Israel will be saved. Yet, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. Difference between inheritance and salvation.

You can be saved and not inherit. You cannot inherit without being saved. We went through that in Romans.

So, this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations and the end will come. When you see the abomination of desolation set up in the holy place, standing in the holy place, well, how can you see the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place unless you are in the country where the holy place exists? Where will the believers be? Judea. Let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. Let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days.

Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. For then there will be great tribulation such as has not been seen since the beginning of the world until this time. No, nor ever shall be.

And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved. But for the elect's sake, those days will be shortened. A lot of flesh is going to perish during the time of the great tribulation.

The last half of Daniel's 70th week, the last three and a half years are going to be, as we will soon see in our Revelation study, quite severe. But these people are pictured as being in Judea. They see the holy place.

They see the abomination of desolation. We are going to see the 144,000 assigned into tribes in Israel, 12,000 from each tribe. How will they do that? My guess is DNA.

They can already type. And there is already a big project underway. I told you before, the family tree DNA project.

There are two or three others that have come up. And you can now not only find out who you are related to with your same last name, but they are doing mitochondrial DNA. They can trace things on your mother's side, just like they can trace things on your father's side.

They can tell you what your stock is. There are certain genetic markers that say that you are European or you are African or you are Asian and trace you back into the general big gene pool. And within Israel, I don't see any reason why it will not soon be possible to find genetic markers that are common amongst all the people named Cohen, amongst all the people with various last names that seem to sort them into their tribes.

And it will probably be a matter of routine, kind of like blood typing now, where they will soon be able to test people and say, well, you know, you are Jewish and this is the tribe you are from. It is scientifically possible to do a lot of that today, like it wasn't possible even 10 years ago. I started out with a whole family DNA project thing a few years ago.

And they did 12 markers. And they were able to isolate the branch of the Hull family that I am from and identified four other people who are a part of the same project who are all related to the same branch. And people I didn't even know of before, that Jesse Hull, 1773, who lived in North Carolina, were all related to that guy.

And not related to Reverend Joseph Hull, who came across in 1634. Well, it is interesting. But now they have extended it to 25 and to 30 something markers.

And there is more and more granularity as they expand and extend it. So it is a thing that is in its infancy. But you can imagine where it is going to be in another 15 or 20 years.

So the idea here of the wrath that is to come is being described here by the Lord Jesus. And he says, Woe to those who are pregnant. Woe to those who are nursing babies.

There is going to be great tribulation such as has not been since the beginning of the world. Totally different than what he says to the disciples in John 14. So he says in verse 23, If anyone says, Look, here is the Christ, or there, do not believe it.

For false Christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand. Notice, there are people who are pointing and saying, Look, here is the Christ, or look, there is the Christ.

And they are talking about the second coming. Just like they did at the first coming. And to deceive, if possible, even the chosen.

Who are the chosen? These are the ones who are believers in the tribulation period about whom some things are said in Revelation. We will see it coming up. Therefore, if they say to you, Look, he is in the desert, do not go out.

Or, Look, he is in the inner rooms, do not believe it. Notice, none of them are saying, I am the Christ. They are saying, He is here, He is there.

He says, Do not believe it. For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. Wherever the carcass is, the eagles will be gathered together.

Immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light. What did Paul say? We are not of the night. We are not of the darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief.

He is talking to a church. It is church age truth. If you are a church age believer, would you not be able to legitimately read Thessalonians? But in this case, the sun is darkened, the moon will not give its light, the stars will fall from heaven, the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn. And they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

He will send his angels with the great sound of a trumpet and they will gather together his elect from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other. Now when he says they will gather together his elect from the four winds, the wind does not blow in heaven. This is a great doctrinal truth.

No wind in heaven. The wind is an earthly phenomenon. It is caused by convection currents, by heating and cooling, juxtaposition of land and sea, etc.

There is no wind in heaven. So, when he gathers his elect from the four winds, and then it says from one end of heaven to the other, this is talking about from the four winds, this is the surface of the earth where the wind blows, from one horizon to the other. From where heaven begins on one side to heaven on the other side.

So this is an earthly gathering. He is not gathering them out of the throne room. He is not gathering them out of the heavenly realms.

One end of heaven to the other is talking about the expanse of the earth. Everything that is in the earthly realms where the winds blow. Now learn this parable from the fig tree.

When the branches already become tender and put forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near at the doors. Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

Once again, what does the fig tree represent in scripture? What did the fig tree represent that Jesus cursed at the first advent? He went to looking for figs, it wasn't there, etc. The fig tree represents Israel. Learn the parable of the fig tree.

Once again, this time is described with an Israelite figure. A Jewish figure. The branches tender and put forth leaves, you know summer is near.

When you see these things, know that it is near at the doors. This generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. Who is this generation? Great debate has raged over that.

Was it the generation to whom he was speaking? He doesn't say you all will not pass away till all these things are fulfilled. He says this generation. What is the generation of which he speaks? The generation that is going through these things.

That generation will not pass away till all these things take place. What is the generation? I think it is the generation represented by the fig tree. Is it the tribulation generation? Is it the generation to whom he is talking? Is it some other generation? What is the context? Learn the parable from the fig tree.

The tree grows. It has a branch and it puts forth green leaves. You know that summer is near.

When you see these things, know that it is near. The day of the Lord, the return of the Lord is near. This generation will by no means pass away.

The fig tree generation. What I find interesting is that Israel was restored to nationhood in 1948. The biblical generation is 40 years.

So there was a lot of raised eyebrows around 1988. But you have the 67 war. You have

the 73 war.

And you have the establishment of the territory of Israel really in 73. What is 40 years forward from 73? 2013. So that is another biblical generation.

The reason I mention that is because when did the people who are now in Israel gain control over Jerusalem? It wasn't really in 1948. It was in 67 and in 73 where they broadened their territory and really gained control like they never had before. And you have the statement made by the Lord Jesus that Jerusalem will be trodden underfoot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

Is Jerusalem still being trodden underfoot by the Gentiles? Yes, it is. Do the Jews control the Temple Mount? No, they don't. But mark my words, something is going to happen in Jerusalem before long.

And the Jews are going to control the Temple Mount at least enough to rebuild the Temple. And when you see that, that's the fig tree. That's the green branches.

That's the leaves. And summer is near. And that generation will not pass away.

It will be within 40 years of them gaining control of the Temple Mount at least sufficient. They will gain control of the area where the Temple will stand. And that's, in my view, that's the fig tree generation.

And that generation will not pass away. And it doesn't mean you're going to run the full 40 years. It just means that's the generation that's going to see the fulfillment of all these signs.

And when you see that happen, that's the fig tree. That's when you have Israel not only as a political entity, but as a spiritual entity. 1948, 1967, 1973, that's geography.

That's topography. That's politics. That's human viewpoint.

But when they gain control and put the Levitical priesthood back into effect, that's the tree. Now you have Israel from God's point of view, from Jesus' point of view. He cursed the fig tree because it wasn't producing figs.

So, in my view, when you see these things, know that it is near at the doors. This generation will not pass away. Heaven and earth will pass away.

My words will by no means pass away. Then you have the illustration from the days of Noah. Of that day and hour, no one knows, not even the angels of heaven.

If the angels of heaven don't know, you and I don't know. The day and the hour. Doesn't say anything about the month or the year, does it? The angels don't know the day and the angels don't know the hour.

But he says you should know the times. You should know the seasons. You know that summer is near.

You may not know that it happens at midnight on the 21st when the summer solstice hits. But you know that the season is coming. As the days of Noah were, so will the coming of the Son of Man be.

Matthew 24, rapture is not in view. This is the coming of the Son of Man. As in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

Two will be in the field. One will be taken and the other left. Two will be grinding at the mill.

One will be taken and the other left. Watch therefore, people of Israel, Old Testament saints, in the 70th week, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. When He comes back and one is taken and one is left, who, let's put ourselves in the position of being a 70th week Israelite, who do you want to be? The one that's taken or the one that's left? You want to be the one that's left.

This is not the rapture. If it's the rapture, you want to be taken. If it's the second coming, you want to be left.

What does Jesus say about the second coming? He will gather out the things that offend. He's going to set up His kingdom and purge off the earth all of the unbelievers. You're going to start the Millennial Kingdom with believers.

So if somebody's taken out, Old Testament saints don't want to be taken anywhere. You want to be raised. You want to be heading into the kingdom.

You want to be left. You want to still be at the mill. You want to still be in the field when the kingdom comes in.

Where would you be taken if you're taken? To heaven? Don't think so. You're taken to be resurrected at the Great White Throne Judgment, judged according to your works and cast into the lake of fire. So, these people want to be left.

Watch therefore, you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. But know this, if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore you also, Old Testament saints, be ready, the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

This is completely different language than what Paul uses in Thessalonians. You're not of the night. You're not of the darkness that this day should overtake you as a thief.

You're of the day and you're of the light. So, completely different. Who then is a faithful and wise servant whom his master made ruler over his household to give them food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master when he comes will find so doing.

That servant is not going to be snatched out of the household, is he? The one faithfully grinding at the mill, the one faithfully laboring in the field is not going to be taken when the master returns. The wise and faithful servant is going to be doing what he's supposed to do. Assuredly, I say to you, he will make him ruler over all his goods.

It's the same goods. It's the same household. If that evil servant says in his heart, My master is delaying his coming, begins to beat his fellow servants, eat and drink with the drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites.

There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. So the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins and you have the rest of these parables. All of this pertains to the second coming.

There is observation, interpretation, application for us. The same principles hold true. We need to watch and be ready.

We need to be faithful for all of the same reasons. But this is talking about the virgins who are going to light the place of celebration for the bridegroom. They are not the bride.

The bridegroom is Christ. The bride is the church. These are Old Testament saints.

They are either ready or they are not. And Jesus, of course, is teaching this truth in all of these chapters, 24 and 25 of Matthew. You get on down to Matthew 25, 31.

When the Son of Man comes in His glory and all the holy angels with Him, He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him and He will separate them one from another. And this is then the end of the Millennial Kingdom.

And a lot of this truth is carried forward seamlessly from the age of Israel into the age of the Millennial Kingdom. And from this point forward in 26 of Matthew and following, when Jesus had finished these sayings, now He is going to anticipate the crucifixion. Well, so what does this tell us about the timing of the rapture? The rapture precedes, is different and separate from the second coming.

The descriptions are completely different. John chapter 14 does not match in any detail Matthew chapter 24, which is clearly the time of the second coming. So whatever else you want to say about the rapture, it cannot be the same as the second coming, which a lot of people, the post-tribulational rapture guys, want to try to say.

Oh, there is just one coming of the Lord. Well, no there is not. There are clearly two and they are separate and distinct.

On one, Jesus comes to earth, sets up His kingdom, takes away the unfaithful, and those who are wise and faithful servants continue on and are made rulers in the same venue, in the same type of environment. In John 14, I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, so where I am, the place where I have gone with the Father, there you may be also. I am going to a place, you know where I am going and the way you know.

He has asked the question, we do not know where you are going, and how do we know the way? I am the way, I am going to the Father. No one comes to the Father, but by me, this is church. So, this explains the scene then, pretty adequately, that we find in Revelation chapter 4. This is the scene that John views.

He sees the throne of the Father. He sees the Lamb seated at the right hand. He sees the 24 elders who represent saints, who have white robes, who are in a position to rule.

This is the promise, not earthly rulership, but sitting on thrones, having crowns and so on. Well, what remains to us now is to view the evidence for the timing of the rapture that we find in the book of Revelation. What do we find in the book of Revelation with regard to the timing of the rapture? We have seen it in Matthew.

We have seen it in John. We have seen it in Thessalonians, both first and second. What about our study, the book of the Revelation? We have already noted the peculiar nature of the vocabulary when it comes to chapter 4. The Great Tribulation is clearly in view, especially in chapter 6 through 19.

There is really no question that the description that John gives matches what Daniel and Ezekiel and Isaiah foretell about the Great Tribulation and the time of Jacob's trouble. It is helpful to note the structure of the narrative of Revelation in determining the time of the rapture. You know from your previous exposure and hearing something about the book of Revelation, we've got seven trumpet judgments coming up, right? We're going to see these seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven bowls pretty much in that order over these next several chapters.

What we're going to find is that these all describe the same general period of time. Do they completely overlap or only partially overlap? That remains to be determined, but the seven seals, the seven trumpets, and the seven bowls all describe in some or in part the last three and a half years of the 70th week of Daniel. The sixth seal that we're going to see broken is going to introduce signs in the heavens just as we have seen in Matthew 24.

In the same way that as a result of the sixth seal we see anguish of men who are crying

out just as you find in 2 Thessalonians chapter 1. When Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire taking vengeance. This is 2 Thessalonians 1, 7-10. Taking vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of Jesus.

These will be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, from the glory of his power when he comes in that day to be glorified in his saints and to be admired among all those who believe because our testimony among you is believed. This is what's pictured at the opening of that seventh seal. Same thing in Matthew 24, verse 30.

We just saw it. The sign of the Son of Man in heaven. The tribes of the earth mourn.

They see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Revelation chapter 1, verse 7. Behold, he is coming with clouds. Every eye will see him, even they who pierced him.

All the tribes of the earth will mourn because of him. Even so, amen. You have the day of the Lord compressed.

It is as though in the same way the age of Israel is viewed with the church age sort of out of sight. You see the day of the Lord, which encompasses the second coming and the resolution at the end of the millennium. The Gog-Magog rebellion and the ultimate resolution are compressed and put together in the day of the Lord.

Because those who pierced him are going to see him. Are they believers or unbelievers? Those who pierced him. Well, you've kind of got a combination, don't you? If you're talking about the Jews, you could make a case that they're believers.

They're Old Testament saints who missed. They were blind and deaf and heart of heart and could not see that Jesus was the Christ when they should have. And then you also have the Romans who pierced him who are pagan, Zeus-worshipping unbelievers, right? So, they who pierced him, who does that refer to? Well, Revelation chapter 1, verse 7. Every eye will see him, even they who pierced him.

I would contend that those who pierced him in this context are the Old Testament Pharisees, Sadducees, Scribes and so on who should have identified Christ, heard him preach, saw his works, were heart of heart and rejected it just as Israel rejected the God of Israel in the desert after they came out of Egypt and didn't go into the land. Faithlessness of believers leading to blindness. But, you're going to see the 7th seal in chapter 8 of Revelation introduces a silence for half an hour.

What's that all about? Well, what's everybody waiting for for half an hour? It's the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, the same thing you see in Matthew 24. So, it's reasonable to see that the seal judgments cover the entire period of the tribulation and don't leave

anything out because the opening of the 7th seal results in the return of the Lord. After that seal is cracked open and then you get to the trumpets, when you get to the 7th trumpet in Revelation 11, the 7th trumpet announces the reign of the Lord Jesus Christ, King of kings and Lord of lords, Revelation 11, 15.

The 7th angel sounds, there's loud voices in heaven saying, the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. He shall reign forever and ever. You've heard that whole thing in the Messiah by Handel.

That's the 7th trumpet. So, you get the idea that the 7th trumpet is at the end of the tribulation just like the 7th seal is. There's nothing left but for him to come down and fulfill that statement.

What about the bowl judgments or the vials? In Revelation 16, 17, when the 7th angel pours out his bowl into the air, a loud voice comes out of the temple of heaven from the throne saying, it is done, it is finished. And that also seems to portend and be a harbinger of the beginning of the millennial kingdom. So, whether you're talking about seals, trumpets or bowls, by the time you get to the 7th one, you seem to be at the end of the tribulation and the beginning of the kingdom.

So, there's a sense in which these cover the entire period and more or less overlap and are different views of the same period. And it can be argued that the seals represent the judgments as viewed by men. Men look at a scroll.

Men see the writing on the inside and the outside of a scroll. And this is the human view of the judgments of God that come down in the last half of the 70th week. The trumpets call forth judgments in heaven in answer to the prayers of the saints.

And the bowls are the wrath of God. Just in Old Testament language, the cup of God's wrath is poured out. And so these seem to be different perspectives of the same general set of conditions and happenings on the earth during that last three and a half years.

So, assuming that's correct, this helps us as we look in the book of Revelation for mention of the rapture. Because here's the point. If the rapture did not take place at 4-1, this is pretty much the earliest we would expect the rapture to have taken place, after the letters to the seven churches and before any of the 70th week of Daniel, that would be the logical time to expect it.

Well, let's say it didn't happen then. And you've got church still on earth and you've gone on into the 70th week. And we'll set aside for the moment questions of, well, do you have a dual priesthood? And should you become a Jew? And what do you do about the Jews who are in the land? Are they Jewish and you're not? And what if a Jew wants to be a church-age guy? To me, that is a deal-breaker right there.

But let's say that it's not, that there's some sort of answer to that that I don't know

about. So, some kind of way that which hinders has been taken out of the way. The man of sin has been revealed and the 70th week has started, but you've still got church on the earth.

The most likely way that that could happen is to take the position that deliverance from the wrath to come is a promise for the overcomers. You've got a bunch of lazy, tired, indolent, heart of heart, blind, deaf and dumb believers who didn't go. You had a partial rapture.

And the faithless, their discipline is to not leave, not be delivered from wrath, because they are of the night and of the darkness and they sort of missed the train. So, assuming that to be true, is there any other time when a subsequent rapture could take place? Or do you see a mention of the rapture at some other point? To me, it's an all or nothing kind of a thing. You're either bride or you're not.

You're not going to get a partial bride joining Christ. Why? Because at the point of the rapture, that is immediately followed by the judgment seat of Christ. And how can you not be at the judgment? Patti made the suggestion that, what do you do with those who are ashamed at the judgment, who are ashamed at His coming that Paul talks about? Paul says you need to be faithful, that you be not ashamed at His coming.

Well, you wouldn't be there to be ashamed if you don't make it. How can you be there for your wood, hay and stubble to be burned, to be saved yet so as by fire and so forth, if you'd have to split up the church and say, well, there's the faithful church and the unfaithful church. You've got two different judgments, two different raptures or two different arrivals.

At what point are you transformed? I just see that being fought with difficulty. What we're looking for in Revelation is, is there any other time in Revelation where you can see a possible rapture of the entire church? Let's just go with that and say, perhaps the church doesn't leave at the beginning of the 70th week and is perhaps along Rosenthal's line going to be a pre-wrath rapture where it happens between one or another, actually between two of the seals. It can't be between one of the seals, can it? But his position is it's between the sixth and seventh seal.

When you have this crowd show up in Revelation chapter 7 from every tribe and nation and kindred and they're all singing the song of salvation, they just popped up because that was the rapture. Does that hold water or not? Well, if the rapture comes after the Great Tribulation or after any part of it, it should come somewhere in the seals, trumpets, and bowls. So, what we need to do is look at this situation.

And we seem to be out of time for tonight. I had great ambitions of finishing our discussion tonight. But this is really the one remaining issue, isn't it? I can see some traction in the idea.

If you read Revelation chapter 7, and I would encourage you to do so before next time, you suddenly have a crowd of blood-washed, white-robed saints singing the song of salvation who appear in heaven after you've already had a bunch of seals opened. So, could the church go through a part of the tribulation and be caught up mid-trib or pre-wrath? Well, this is the last subject we need to address. And we'll try to do that next time.

And then we'll move on into chapter 5 and following. But we'll close here for tonight. One thing is sure.

Jesus says, Let not your heart be troubled. Paul says, Comfort one another with these words. So, whatever we conclude, it ought to be a source of comfort and encouragement that we have been delivered from the wrath to come.

And we comfort one another with these words. Well, let's close in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the truth that is contained in your word and the promise that if we ask and seek and knock, we will find what you have for us in that truth.

We pray that God, the Holy Spirit, will minister these things to our hearts, help us to live our lives in the light of coming things. We know that the time is short. Every day counts.

And we have the opportunity to redeem the time even though the days are evil. We pray that our lives will reflect the glory of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray it in His name.

Amen.