



Pre-Tribulation Rapture Proof: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 *Pastor JD Farag*

Let's turn in your Bibles to 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 and our text will be verses 13-18. I'll ask you to stand, if you're able and you can follow along as I read. If not where you seated is fine.

The Apostle Paul, by the Holy Spirit, is writing to the church there in Thessalonica and says, verse 13, "Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death. So that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind who have no hope." You're still going to grieve, but not like those who don't have hope.

Here's why, in verse 14, "For we believe that Jesus died and rose again." This is the gospel. "And so, we believe that God will bring, with Jesus, those who have fallen asleep in him." Again, speaking of death. "According to the Lord's word, [verse 15] we tell you that we, who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep.

For the Lord, himself, will come down from heaven with a loud command with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that [verse 17] we, who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so we will be with the Lord, forever. Therefore, [verse 18] encourage one another with these words." Wow. "Chicken skin" [goose bumps].

Let's pray. Thank you, Lord. Lord, would you at this time as only you can? Bless and anoint the teaching of your Word blessed to our understanding especially, concerning this doctrine, this passage that we have before us today. Lord, speak by your Holy Spirit, we pray in Jesus name. Amen and amen. You can be seated, thank you.

So, it probably goes without saying and I can see the look on all of your faces as I was just reading that passage. Like many of you, I'm sure, I've really been looking forward to this particular passage and I think for what would be deemed obvious reasons. Chiefly, because of the specificity with which the Apostle Paul, by the Spirit of God, writes to this church concerning the sound doctrine of the rapture of the church.

In the 6 verses within our text today, we have 3 of what, I would argue, are many and I would even say numerous proofs in Scripture as to why it is that the rapture has to happen before the 7-year tribulation. Wow, pastor, you're pretty dogmatic. You'd better believe that I am. Well, but pastor with all due respect, the doctrine of a pre-



Pre-Tribulation Rapture Proof: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 *Pastor JD Farag*

tribulation rapture is not a matter of salvation. That's correct. However, and there is a however.

While it may not be a matter of salvation, it is most certainly a matter of sanctification and I'll explain why and how I get there. The impact that this truth, this sound doctrine of a pre-tribulation rapture can impact our lives in a profound way.

Listen to what the Apostle John wrote in his 1st epistle, the 3rd chapter, verses 2-3. He says, "Dear friends, now we are children of God and what we will be, has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is."

And then he says this, "All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure." In other words, those who have this hope live with the anticipation, even the expectation, of the imminence of the Lord's return at any time. What do they do? Those who have this hope in his appearing? What do they do? Oh, they purify themselves. They get their affairs in order. They get ready and they are ready because he can come at any time.

See, if I believe, that somehow the church goes through part of, or even the entirety of the 7-year tribulation? And you'll forgive me for the bluntness with which I say this but you'll have to rip out pages in your Bible with verses like this one and many others with it as well.

What I want to do today is look at 3 proofs. I use that word proof. I know it's a strong word. By the way, it is conspicuously absent. Instead from any teaching on the rapture, will be this word "theory". It's no theory. It is truth. It is doctrine. It is sound doctrine.

What I want to do today and, please, forgive me as I know that I am very passionate about the pre-tribulation rapture. I'll try to do my best. I asked the Lord, while we were worshiping, to just temper me and that's kind of a tall order sometimes, I think. But just to settle me in this regard. Let me just say it like this, since this is the service that gets uploaded to YouTube.

There are many who will take issue, and do, with any teaching about a pre-tribulation rapture. The vitriol, the viciousness, is really grievous. So, what I want to do is just say especially, for anyone watching online, let's just agree to disagree, agreeably, okay?



Pre-Tribulation Rapture Proof: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 *Pastor JD Farag*

But as far as the Word of God is concerned and the passage that we have before us today? I want to show you why it is that the rapture absolutely has to happen before the 7-year tribulation.

Here's the first one. It's because it's the trumpet call of God. Now, at first read, this would seem sort of inconsequential. I mean, here's this, I guess you might say, even nebulous detail that we're told that there's going to be this trumpet call.

But it's the trumpet call of God. Notice, in verse 16, where Paul says that there will be this loud command and with it the voice of the archangel. And, very important, the trumpet call of God.

Okay, pastor, how does this prove that the rapture is before the 7-year tribulation? Because in Scripture there are two trumpets: There's the trumpet of angels for Israel; and the trumpet of God for the church. Please, please, please make that distinction. A lot of people get into a lot of trouble concerning the sound doctrine of a pre-tribulation rapture when they fail to distinguish between the church and Israel.

In fact, I'll take it further and say that a false teaching known as "Replacement Theology", which replaces Israel with the church as God's elect. That false doctrine, that false teaching, is roommates with the other teachings concerning the rapture, the false teachings concerning the rapture.

Because, you see, if the church replaces Israel? Then you are forced to put the church in the tribulation. Why? Because the purpose of the tribulation is for the salvation of the Jewish nation. When you fail to make that distinction then you're basically, putting the church in the tribulation.

What's the purpose of putting the church in the tribulation? The church is already saved. The bride is already saved. Why would the bride need to go through the tribulation? No, it's for Israel. So, you have the trumpet sound of angels, which is for Israel and you have the trumpet sound of God, which is for the church.

Listen to what Jesus said in Matthew 24, speaking of the 2nd coming and he's speaking to the disciples concerning Israel. Listen to what he says, "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven and then 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.



Pre-Tribulation Rapture Proof: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 Pastor JD Farag

Notice all the tribes. This is the 2nd coming, "Every eye will see". He will send his angels, not even an archangel angel, just his angels. "With a great sound of a trumpet." That's the trumpet for Israel. "And they will gather together his elect [Israel] from the 4 winds from one end of heaven to the other." That's the distinction.

In the letter to the Thessalonians, Paul makes it very clear that it is not the trumpet of angels for Israel. This is the trumpet call of God for the church.

Here's the second one. I know this might seem like a firm grasp of the obvious. But, the 2nd proof, in our text of a pre-tribulation rapture, is that we're caught up in the air.

I want to draw your attention to verse 17. This is actually where the word rapture is in the Bible. It is! If you have a Latin Bible. Anybody have a Latin Bible here today? Raise your hand? Nobody? I had an online member last time I mentioned this, from Romania post a comment and said, "In our Romanian language, it's the word, "rapture"." So, anybody have a Romanian Bible?

The word "rapture" is in the Bible depending on the language of the Bible you have. Now, in the English language, it's translated with 2 English words, "caught up", "Harpazo" in the Greek; "Rapturo" in the Latin. It means to be caught up with great force and great speed. Raptured up! Snatched away! Quickly! That's what the word means.

So, back to verse 17, Paul says, "We, who are still alive and remain, will be raptured up to meet the Lord in the air." Oh, by the way, we will not precede those who died in Christ because the bodily resurrection is first. The dead in Christ rise first. I might need to maybe explain this quickly so if you'll just bear with me.

The best explanation I ever heard concerning this was the analogy of a light bulb. Okay? So, the light bulb burns out. What do we do? We take it out, put it in the rubbish. It goes back to the earth from where it was created. What happens to the electricity? It goes back to its source. What happens to the light? It's ceased.

We are like that light bulb. When we die? Our body, like the bulb goes back into the ground. Dust to dust, from where it was created. The electricity? Like the spirit, back to its source. To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord in spirit. What happens to the light? That's the soul. It is deceased. It will, again, live for all



Pre-Tribulation Rapture Proof: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 *Pastor JD Farag*

eternity when we have our glorified bodies. And when the bodily resurrection takes place, which is first then they get their new bodies.

Then we," Paul writing to the Corinthians in chapter 15:51-52, "Will put off our old bodies." I cannot wait! We put off corruptible and we put on incorruptible. In the twinkling of an eye which, by the way maybe we'll talk about this in chapter 5. But it is a fraction of a nanosecond that's how quick it's going to be.

We who are alive and remain when we get our new bodies. So, the bulb is the body; the electricity is the spirit; and the soul is the light. What Paul is saying is that the dead in Christ are going to rise first. That's their bodily resurrection.

Well, where are they now? Well, in spirit, they're with the Lord. To be absent from the body, is to be present with the Lord. Well, then they're going to get their bodies first. That's fine.

Then we, who are and remain, will get our new bodies in the twinkling of an eye and we will meet them in the air. Now, you're asking me the question because I can read your minds. Just a moment, something's coming in right now. Oh, wow. Oh my. [Joking]

How does this prove that we're going to be caught up? Raptured up? Harpazo? Whatever you prefer, prior to the 7-year tribulation? I'm so glad you asked because I'm going to give you the answer.

The reason it proves a pre-tribulation rapture is because Jewish bridegrooms would come as a thief in the night. At an hour that nobody knew and they would abduct their bride, take them away. That's what Jesus is saying here. It's been a few years since I've done this so, I thought, after seeking the Lord, it would be appropriate today to once again talk about this.

It is to me one of the most convincing, and compelling proofs of the pre-tribulation rapture. It has to do with ancient Jewish wedding customs. It's typology. It paints this magnificent and beautiful picture of a pre-tribulation rapture.

I hope you understand that when Jesus is speaking to his disciples, he is speaking to them. And they would have understood it, by the way. He's speaking to them as a bridegroom would speak to his bride. What I want to do is share with you, this is actually an abbreviated



Pre-Tribulation Rapture Proof: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 *Pastor JD Farag*

explanation of the typology. Specific to why the rapture absolutely, has to happen before the 7-year tribulation. I'm going to go quickly, stay with me.

In the Jewish wedding, it's a marriage covenant, "ketubah". It's made in writing, for the bride, as a promise to the bride that it will be fulfilled. With our wedding, it's a new covenant. It's made in writing, in the written word of God, for us as the bride and the old covenant promise is fulfilled. I'll have the verses there on the screen so you can write them down. They are also on your notes.

In the Jewish wedding, they would then break bread and drink from the cup to seal the betrothal. Kiddushin, this is the betrothal, the new covenant, marriage covenant. With our wedding, he breaks bread and drinks from the cup at the Last Supper, sealing his new covenant in his blood.

What if I told you that every time, we partake together of the communion table as we do on the first Sunday of the month? We are celebrating our betrothal to our bridegroom, Jesus the Christ. This is how they would seal it.

Now we have the written covenant and the bridegroom would then give the cup to the bride. Then she would drink from the cup as if to say, "I will marry you". "Will you marry me? I will marry you. I accept." And they would eat from the bread. That's how they would seal the betrothal of this new marriage covenant.

With the Jewish wedding, the groom pays the price, "mohar" showing the bride his love for her. With our wedding, Jesus paid the price. It cost him everything, on the cross. This shows us how there's no greater love than his laying down of his life for us.

The Jewish wedding, this is where it gets interesting. The groom, after the betrothal, they've sealed now the engagement. They've partaken of the bread. They've drunk from the cup and now they are betrothed to get married. So, what does the groom do? He goes to his Father's house. He builds a bridal chamber, a room addition on his Father's house.

When Jesus said to his disciples, "Behold, I go to prepare a place for you. In my Father's house are many mansions. [dwelling places depending on which translation you have] If it were not so, I would not have told you that I go to prepare a place for you where I will come back and I will take you."



Pre-Tribulation Rapture Proof: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 *Pastor JD Farag*

He's talking as a bridegroom to his bride that he is betrothed to. It gets even better. The Father was the only one in Jewish tradition, who knew the day or the hour, of the groom's return, to abduct, catch away, rapture his bride.

Can you imagine trying to plan a wedding? The invitations? Date? Don't know. Time? Don't know, only the Father knows. Nobody knew but the father. Jesus said that no one but the Father knows the day or the hour of his return, for us as his bride.

Now, with the Jewish wedding when the bridegroom comes, the groomsmen run ahead and shout, "He's coming!" And how do they do it? By blowing a trumpet. With our wedding? When our bridegroom comes? It will be with a shout of the trumpet of God that Jesus is coming.

Now, you're going to notice on the screen, Revelation chapter 4:1 and here's why. In the first 3 chapters of the Book of Revelation, you will find the church mentioned 19 times.

From chapter 4 verse 1 on, "church" isn't mentioned. Chapters 6-19 of the Book of Revelation are all about the 7-year Guess how many times the word "church" is found in chapters 6-19? This is not a trick question.
It's "zero." Not once.

Why is the word "church" not in chapters 6-19 which is all about the 7-year tribulation? Because the church isn't in the tribulation! That's why! Because in verse 1 of chapter 4, John hears a voice like the sound of a trumpet. And it says, "Come up hither!" He's raptured up!

By the way, from chapter 4 verse 1 on to chapter 22, it's all future. Do you know where we are right now? We're in chapter 3, still. The 7 letters to the 7 churches, chapters 2 and 3, church history. From chapter 4:1, when that trumpet sounds and John is caught up? Everything is future.

It's actually, interesting the Book of Revelation. I don't want to get too far off into this in the interest of time. But you really, have this as one called, a "Divine Outline".

Chapter 1, John is told to write that which he has seen. That which is now and that which is to come here after. In other words, that which is past, present and future.



Pre-Tribulation Rapture Proof: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 *Pastor JD Farag*

Chapter 1: Past.

He was an eyewitness of Jesus Christ glorified and now at the right hand of the Father that is chapter 1.

Chapters 2 and 3: Present.

Church history: 7 letters to 7 churches, literal churches.

Chapter 4:1: Rapture.

Chapters 6-19: Tribulation.

Chapter 20: Millennium.

Chapters 21 and 22: The new heavens and the new earth.

Beautiful! And they say the Book of Revelation is a hard book to understand? Do you know that it's the only book in the entire Bible that promises a blessing to those who read it, hear it and take it to heart?

Well, here's the next one. In the Jewish wedding, the groom snatches away and abducts his bride. With our wedding, Jesus, our groom, will rapture us away as he abducts us as his bride.

In the Jewish wedding, the groom takes his bride to this chamber. This place that he prepared for her in his father's house. They consummate "nissuim" and celebrate for a period of, wait for it: Seven, "shavua", days. With our wedding, Jesus will take us to his bridal chamber that he prepared for us in his Father's house and we will consummate and celebrate for a period of 7 years.

It has to be before the seven years. One commentator said it best this way, "While the world is tribulating, we're going to be celebrating." I don't want to be tribulating. I want to be I want to be celebrating, consummating.

In the Jewish wedding, there's a big feast. This brings me great comfort because it means that there's going to be food in heaven. Can I get an "amen" on that? You have to understand that in the Middle Eastern culture and this is true in my Arab culture. In the Middle East, everything is centered around the feast: The food; the breaking of bread together.

So, after the 7, the bride and the groom emerge from the bridal chamber. They have this huge wedding feast, the "Wedding Supper of the Lamb". If you don't rapture the bride until halfway through the seven-year tribulation? We have a problem. If you don't rapture the bride until the wrath is poured out? You have a problem.



Pre-Tribulation Rapture Proof: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 Pastor JD Farag

Listen, I don't mean to overstate it but don't mess with typology. You can ask Moses about that as he did that it. It cost him the Promised Land, by the way because he was commanded the first time to "strike the rock", the rock is Christ, and water came out.

The second time he was so angry. God says, "Speak to the rock and water will come out." What does Moses do? He strikes it! Ho! After he does that, it's like "Mo"! [Moses] Big no, no, Mo! You see that rock was not to be struck a second time because Christ was only crucified once, struck once. And after the crucifixion, you speak to the rock. You speak to Christ and he ruined the typology. It cost him entrance into the Promised Land.

That's how serious the typology is. Everything in the Old Testament points to the person of Jesus Christ who is the fulfillment of everything and I mean everything. All of the sacrifices, all of the service in the temple? Everything pointed to the person of Jesus Christ.

One said it this way, "The Old Testament conceals what the New Testament reveals." What's the New Testament revealed? Jesus Christ! It all points to him.

Then lastly, in the Jewish wedding, the new home of the bride was Jerusalem. It was the bridegroom who came to the bride to dwell with her. And it is from the New Jerusalem that Jesus, our bridegroom, will dwell with us forever and ever.

Here's the third reason, lastly. The rapture has to happen before the 7-year tribulation because we can encourage one another. Notice in verse 18 where Paul says, "We are to encourage one another with these words." Now you have to understand that the Thessalonians were very discouraged, very battle-wearied. They were downcast and Paul wants to encourage them and he says, "You can encourage each other with these words."

Okay, well, how does that prove a pre-tribulation rapture? Well, think about this. How could Paul say, "Encourage one another with these words: 'A third of the population of earth is going to be killed, wiped out. It's going to be unspeakable horror, unthinkable, during the 7-year trib. Therefore encourage one another with...'" It doesn't fit, does it?



Pre-Tribulation Rapture Proof: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 *Pastor JD Farag*

Well, how does it prove a pre-tribulation rapture? Because if it were not before the 7-year tribulation? The Apostle Paul would be warning about surviving and not encouraging about escaping.

Perhaps you've heard the rapture referred to as the "Great Escape". I love it. I actually, didn't used to love it when well-intentioned Christians would say to me concerning the sound doctrine of the pre-tribulation rapture, "Oh, you just want to escape." I'm like yeah! Ya think! And you don't? Do you want to be here? For that? Have you read what's going to happen during the 7-year tribulation? Would I want to be here for that?

Lord willing, next week we're going to be in chapter 5 and the reason is, is because chapter 5 comes after chapter 4. I know that's deeply profound. We're going to get to another one of my favorite verses. It's a verse that we talk about quite often in our prophecy updates.

That's 1 Thessalonians chapter 5:3 and here's why. Paul says, "While people are saying peace and security, destruction will come on them suddenly as labor pains on a pregnant woman and they will not escape."

Now, why would you say it like that? By the way, there were not chapter breaks and verses. There weren't chapter and verses in the original writings. That didn't come till later. So, this is right after he gets done saying, "We who are alive and remain will be caught up to meet... and encourage each other with these words."

Then after he talks about the "we who were alive", he talks about the "they who were alive" when this happens. To me the emphasis is on, "we will escape"; They will not escape. The escape is the rapture. When sudden destruction...

Do you know what the thing about sudden destruction is? Its "sudden". Again, I know deeply profound. I'm not trying to be cute or clever. It's going to happen so suddenly, so quickly and it will come upon them as a pregnant woman. I mean, this is the analogy that the Savior, himself, used in describing the time of the end.

"It will be like birth pains. It comes with greater intensity and greater frequency." It's going to come on "them", not "we who are alive and remain". They will not escape. We, who are alive and remain, escape. It has to be, before the 7-year tribulation.



Pre-Tribulation Rapture Proof: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 *Pastor JD Farag*

There's one last thing and then we'll close and go to our prophecy update. Throughout the Old Testament, we have pictures of a pre-tribulation rapture.

Joseph takes a Gentile bride before the 7-year famine. That's a picture of a pre-tribulation rapture.

How about Noah? Many Christians say, "Well, the Ark is salvation." No, Noah and his family represent Israel. They go into the flood and are saved in the midst of the flood.

But where's Enoch? Oh, I love chapter five. We're told Enoch walked with God and was no more because God took him! Yeah, he raptured him - pre-flood! He was a pre-flood believer! Yeah that's my thinking.

Enoch is a picture of the church; And Noah a picture of Israel.

Oh, there's many throughout the entirety of the Old Testament. But when you get to the Book of Daniel, another very interesting one. Do you know Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego? Do you remember that from Sunday School, probably? The flannelgraph and here they go into the fiery furnace?

There're some details in that, by the way. The reason why they were thrown into that fiery furnace is because they would not bow down to the image that was with: 6 instruments played, 60 cubits high, 6 cubits wide, 666. They would not bow down to that image. They were cast into the fire.

Here's another detail, very important, 7 times hotter fiery furnace, not six. Look it up, just check me out. Don't take my word for it. Be a Berean, search the Scriptures, see if this be true. It wasn't 8 times hotter, no it was 7 times. What a coincidence? No coincidence.

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego are a picture of Israel. They will go into the 7 times hotter, fiery, furnace of the 7-year tribulation and be saved in the midst of it. Nebuchadnezzar is dumbfounded! "We put three of them in there! There's 4 and the 4th looks like the Son of God! It is! It's Jesus! They're saved by Jesus in the midst of the 7 times hotter, fiery, furnace! Like Israel will be saved by Jesus! Their true Messiah in the middle of the 7-year tribulation!

Where's Daniel? Oh? Good question. I'm glad you asked, you asked, right? He's not there. Why not? Oh, because pre-furnace. Daniel is



Pre-Tribulation Rapture Proof: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 *Pastor JD Farag*

taken up, exalted to a high position, pre-furnace: Picture of the church. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego are a picture of Israel. Do you see how important it is to distinguish between the church and Israel?

But this is the last, lastly. Okay? The rapture of the Church of Jesus Christ must happen before the 7-year tribulation. You be encouraged! And you encourage one another! I know many of you are going through some very difficult times. And I want to encourage you with these words, with this word, from God's Word.

I, myself, am so encouraged. You probably, couldn't tell. I mean, I think to myself that at any time that trumpet is going to sound. My daughter, Noelle, my mom and, I hope, my dad too, they're going to get their bodies first. The bodily resurrection will take first and they're going to be in the air! I'm going to meet the Lord and see them again in the air! Are you kidding me!

By the way, what is Paul writing to them about to begin with? He's answering their question about their loved ones that had died. What happens to them? How does that all work together with the rapture? Okay, this will be the last, last, last one.

Don't you find it interesting? The first epistle the Apostle Paul ever wrote? It was to the Thessalonians. As we have learned, he wished, longed, and wanted to go back because he was run out of town. He was there, some believe, for only three weeks.

Don't you find it interesting that he plants this church, he talks to them and encourages them concerning the sound doctrine of the pre-tribulation rapture in a period of only 3 weeks? Wow! The 1st time the gospel is written in one of his epistles is to this church. Wow! What does that tell you?

Okay, I said that was the last. So, let's pray. Lord, thank you. I pray for anyone here today or watching online that's really hurting, downcast, discouraged and struggling. Lord, I pray that you'll encourage and strengthen their hearts with these words, with this truth, from your Word.

That soon and very soon that trumpet is going to sound. We who are alive and remain are going to be caught up and we're going to be with you forever and ever.

Lord, come quickly. Maranatha.

In Jesus name. Amen.