



**Doctrine: The Rapture of the Church
Examples of Rescue
Part 2
1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11**

Scripture quotations are taken from the following translations:

ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

**Scripture quotations taken from the New American Standard Bible® (NASB),
Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973,
1975, 1977, 1995, 2020 by The Lockman Foundation
Used by permission. www.Lockman.org**

Scripture quoted by permission. Quotations designated (NET) are from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996, 2019 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://netbible.com> All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked (NLT) are taken from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

The Good News Translation Bible (GNB) text used in this product is being used by permission. Copyright © American Bible Society, 1966, 1971, 1976, 1992

Scripture taken from the Holy Bible: International Standard Version® Release 2.0. (ISV) Copyright © 1996–2011 by the ISV Foundation. Used by permission of Davidson Press, LLC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED INTERNATIONALLY

Scripture quotations contained herein are from the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition Bible (NRSVue), Copyright © 2021, National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide

**Scripture taken from the New King James Version (NKJV).
Copyright 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.**

**Scripture taken from The Holy Bible: The Contemporary English Version (CEV).
©1995 by The American Bible Society, Thomas Nelson, Nashville TN.**

Scripture quotations marked (CSB) have been taken from the Christian Standard Bible®, Copyright © 2017 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by permission. Christian Standard Bible® and CSB® are federally registered trademarks of Holman Bible Publishers.

Taken from the Complete Jewish Bible (CJB) by David H. Stern. Copyright © 1998. All rights reserved. Used by permission of Messianic Jewish Publishers, 6120 Day Long Lane, Clarksville, MD 21029. www.messianicjewish.net

We began looking at this incredible doctrine of the church last week.

We discovered this was first introduced by Jesus in John 14.



John 14:1–3

“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.” (ESV)

We learned that the term used today, the rapture of the church, is based on the Latin, not the English or Greek text.

The meaning is the same though. Harpazo, the word used by Paul means to seize or take by force, to snatch away. Our translation uses the term “caught up.” It is important to remember that Satan and his followers are not wanting this to happen, they may possibly try and prevent it from happening but that will not succeed.

Why would they even try?

We need to remember we are working in the supernatural world as we discuss this doctrine.

We tend to forget there is a war going on in the unseen realm. There are those who are working 24/7 to prevent anything the Lord wants to have happen here on planet earth from happening. But Satan is a defeated foe, Jesus has already won everything on the cross.

At the Rapture, the devil and his cohorts may do all in their power to keep Christians here on earth. But the Lord Jesus will overpower them, delivering us by the omnipotent power at His command as if carrying us off by supreme might. (Jeremiah 20:23, 72)

Prophecy is huge in the Bible, and as such, since we teach the Bible chapter by chapter, verse by verse, it is huge to us as well.

We believe that Jesus Christ will, at any moment, return for His church taking us to be with Him prior to the beginning of the Tribulation. We believe in and teach the pretribulation rapture of the church. We are waiting for the Day of Christ. That is different from the Day of the Lord. The Day of the Lord cannot begin, until the church is removed from this planet.

1 Thessalonians 4:13–5:11

“But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as indeed the rest of mankind do, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose from the dead, so also God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep through Jesus. For we say this to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who remain, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. Therefore, comfort one another with these words. Now as to the periods and times, brothers and sisters, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord is coming just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, “Peace and safety!” then sudden destruction will come upon them like labor pains upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness, so that the day would overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; so then, let’s not sleep as others do, but let’s be alert and sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who are drunk, get drunk at night. But since we are of the day, let’s be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we



are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. Therefore, encourage one another and build one another up, just as you also are doing.” (NASB 2020)

1. The church and church age ends in→the rapture
2. The entire church (of 2000 years) meets Him in→the rapture
3. The entire church meets Him all together for the first time in→the rapture
4. There are no signs, miracles, wonders, or events prior to→the rapture
5. There is blessed hope in→the rapture
6. There is promised comfort in→the rapture
7. The entire church is to be prepared always to meet Him in→the rapture (Olander 2009, 21)

As we have learned, there are no signs to be fulfilled letting us know the rapture is near. There are signs pointing to the nearness of the second coming of Jesus Christ.

We must remember that God has a plan for the Church, a plan for Israel, and a plan for the nations. Some of Israel is in the Church, but not all. The Church began at Pentecost and ends with the rapture.

Paul included, along with other doctrines of the church, teaching on the rapture as part of his discipling program for the brand-new believers in Thessalonica. He refers to this doctrine frequently in the book, even before arriving at chapter 4.

1 Thessalonians 1:9–10

“For they themselves report about us as to the kind of reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, and to **wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is, Jesus who rescues us from the wrath to come.**” (NASB 2020)

This was a church firmly committed to the imminency of the return of Jesus Christ for His church. We learn here, they are already waiting for Him to rescue them from the world.

We also learned that there have been other raptures in the pages of the Bible and covered where those are in the text. There is also a curious item in Isaiah in the same section that discusses the resurrection of the Jews at the end of the age but before we look at that, there is another question we need to examine. This is important considering the rapture and the answer shows us once again the heart of God and His leaning into grace on behalf of His people.

Are there examples in the scriptures, where God protects those who He loves, from His wrath and anger towards sin, which He is pouring out to a specific group? Are there rescues?

In other words, does God protect His people as they confront the wrath of God being poured out to judge a lost community or world. Or does God simply consider those believers caught in a judgement situation as collateral damage? Not hardly, He takes care of His kids.

By studying the ways God acted to rescue His people in the past, we can learn much that will add to our understanding about God’s future rescue of His people at the Rapture. (Jeremiah 2023, 180)

Our first example of how God protects His own is reflected in what takes place in the antediluvian world of Genesis. Jesus provided a pointer for us as a sign of His second coming with events related to what was happening in the days of Noah and our second example, the days of Lot as well.

In Matthew 24, after leaving the Temple for the last time, as part of His answering some questions on the Mount of Olives, Jesus begins talking about no one knowing the day or hour when He will come to retrieve His own.



His disciples are listening, but His explanation in John 14 has not yet taken place.

Matthew 24:36–42

“But as for that day and hour no one knows it—not even the angels in heaven—except the Father alone. For just like the days of Noah were, so the coming of the Son of Man will be. For in those days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark. And they knew nothing until the flood came and took them all away. It will be the same at the coming of the Son of Man. Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one left. There will be two women grinding grain with a mill; one will be taken and one left. Therefore stay alert, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.” (NET 2nd ed.)

That isn't the only place Jesus talked about this topic. He is talking about events just prior to His second coming and what that would look like. Earlier in the same week, he had been asked a battery of questions by the Pharisees as to when the Kingdom of God was coming. He answered, but then He spoke further to His disciples, there in the Temple, about the topic. Jesus provided them a couple of examples of what life would be like here on earth, just prior to the Son of Man being revealed.

Luke 17:26–30

“Just as it was in the days of Noah, so too it will be in the days of the Son of Man. People were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage—right up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot, people were eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting, building; but on the day Lot went out from Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all. It will be the same on the day the Son of Man is revealed.” (NET 2nd ed.)

We know that because of the fall, as Adam and Eve began to have children, those kids came with a built-in sin problem already there. Cain and Able are premier examples of that. Cain killed his brother over a religious issue. Abel sacrificed an animal, but Cain laid out fruits and veggies. God accepted the sacrifice of Abel but rejected Cain's.

Those who wish to approach God on their conditions, continue to this day to persecute and kill those who insist on doing things His way.

What Cain had offered was characteristic of offering the work of his hands in sacrifice, rather than the giving of something precious and irreplaceable, the life of an animal.

Genesis 4:7–8

“If you had done the right thing, you would be smiling; but because you have done evil, sin is crouching at your door. It wants to rule you, but you must overcome it.” Then Cain said to his brother Abel, “Let's go out in the fields.” When they were out in the fields, Cain turned on his brother and killed him.” (GNB)

Things did not improve from there. Some fallen divine beings, watchers, later arrived on earth to defile man further.

Genesis 6:1–8

“And Noah lived five hundred years, and Noah fathered three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And it happened when humans began to become numerous upon the earth, and they had daughters, the angels of God, having seen the daughters of humans, that they were beautiful, took for themselves women from all whom they picked out. The Lord God said, “My breath will certainly not reside in these humans for very long because they are flesh, but their days will be one hundred and twenty years.” Now giants were upon the earth in those days, and after that, whenever the sons of God entered into the daughters of humans, they fathered children for themselves; those were the giants who were from long ago, the people of



renown. Now the Lord God saw that the wicked actions of humans multiplied upon the earth, and everyone was focused in his heart on evil things all their days. And God reflected that he made humankind upon the earth and considered. **And God said, “I will discard humanity, whom I made, from the face of the earth, from human to animal, and from creeping things to winged birds of the heavens, because I am angry that I made them.” But Noah found grace before the Lord God.**” (Brannan, et al. 2020, Genesis 6:1-8)

And that wasn't all that was going on with those fallen angels. They were also teaching man things unintended for man.

Enoch 8:1–3

“And Azâzêl taught men to make swords, and knives, and shields, and breastplates, and made known to them the metals of the earth and the art of working them, and bracelets, and ornaments, and the use of antimony, and the beautifying of the eyelids, and all kinds of costly stones, and all colouring tinctures. And there arose much godlessness, and they committed fornication, and they were led astray, and became corrupt in all their ways. Semjâzâ taught enchantments, and root-cuttings, Armârôs the resolving of enchantments, Barâqijâl, taught astrology, Kôkabêl the constellations, Ezêqêêl the knowledge of the clouds, Araqiêl the signs of the earth, Shamsiêl the signs of the sun, and Sariêl the course of the moon.” (Charles and Oesterley 1917, Enoch 8:1-3)

The Septuagint is clear about the supernatural aspects of this sin of the fallen angels. “That sin, which precipitated the Flood, was sexual in nature; it is placed in the same category as the sin that prompted the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah. The transgression was interpreted by Peter and Jude as evidence of despising authority and the boundaries of “proper dwelling” for the parties concerned.” (Heiser 2017, 14)

Fallen angels, fallen divine beings came to earth, assumed human form, cohabited with women in a forbidden cross species relationship and had children, giants. Nephilim.

The fallen ones intended to corrupt and defile mankind, the human genome, and end the war God declared in Genesis 3 by preventing there from being someone fully human being left to have the offspring promised in Genesis 3:15. The book of Enoch refers to them as fallen angels, Watchers.

“The Watchers, then, are clearly celestial (nonhuman) beings whose actions are regarded not only as morally evil, but spiritually destructive. While human rebellion first appeared in Eden, it is the actions of the Watchers that served as a catalyst to spread wickedness among humanity like a spiritual contagion. They are held responsible for teaching humans a variety of things that engender lust, warfare, astrology, occult practices, etc.” (Heiser 2017, 32)

Mankind was spiraling downward rapidly because of this. To use an anthropomorphism, God decided to destroy His creation but, in His grace, He saved Noah and his family. There would be a rescue mission.

Noah found grace. A few hundred years earlier, as all the craziness was going on, there was another man who had remained faithful to the Lord for over 300 years. His name was Enoch.

Genesis 5:21–24

“When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah. After he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked with God for 300 years, and he had other sons and daughters. The entire lifetime of Enoch was 365 years. Enoch walked with God, and then he disappeared because God took him away.” (NET 2nd ed.)

Enoch was raptured, removed before God's wrath fell.



Here is an important point to remember. Enoch is the Father of Methuselah, who happens to be Noah's granddad. Methuselah's father, Enoch, was a preacher of righteousness (Jude 14-16). Methuselah died just before the flood.

That completes the picture for us. God delivered them both from the coming wrath, and together they represent those who will be raptured and resurrected when Jesus comes in the sky for His people. (Jeremiah 2023, 181)

Now we have arrived at the days of Noah. Incredible wickedness.

Now remember, Jesus is talking about conditions when He physically returns to planet earth at the end of the Tribulation, but do we see conditions like those of the days of Noah around us today? The answer is yes.

This is tough to parse through looking at what Jesus is saying as we look forward to an event, the rapture, that has no signs attached to it at all. As a result, we look at those signs pointing to the second coming to see if they are taking place or all converging pointing to that event, the second coming, being soon. If that is the case, then look up.

The world's culture laughs at Christians when we talk about a coming judgment coupled with the Second Coming of Christ. And they laugh even louder at the thought of a "rapture" which removes all Christians off the face of the earth prior to seven years of intense judgment by God on those left behind. Noah was a picture of what we can expect in our day as judgment draws closer. (Jeremiah, Heroes of the Faith: Study Guide 2001, 48)

For now, the invitation to come is there and the door of the ark is open for all to enter.

Noah was rescued, he and his family were invited by the Lord into the ark and then God was the one who closed the door. They were kept safe above and away, protected from the judgement, as it took place.

This is a picture of His protection for the remnant that Jesus warns to leave Jerusalem when they see the antichrist show up and demand worship, also referred to by Daniel as well taking place at the midpoint of the Tribulation.

Does that mean what we see will get worse? Much worse after we leave.

In His warning about conditions prior to His return in Matthew 24, Jesus has embedded something else.

Matthew 24:36–42

"But as for that day and hour no one knows it—not even the angels in heaven—except the Father alone. For just like the days of Noah were, so the coming of the Son of Man will be. For in those days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark. And they knew nothing until the flood came and took them all away. It will be the same at the coming of the Son of Man. Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one left. There will be two women grinding grain with a mill; one will be taken and one left. **Therefore stay alert, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.**" (NET 2nd ed.)

Prior to His physical return people, even at the end of the Great Tribulation, will still be clueless. Amazing, with all we read in Revelation. We see that here, but we also see that as events that have no signs



connected with them kick off, people will be caught off guard. The rapture of the church will be a shock, just like the flood.

Imagine, some guy building a huge barge out in the backyard for over 100 years. Every day he invites anyone who will listen to sign on and join him to be rescued from what is coming. Like what we are doing as we share the word with others.

There is also the comparative to the Days of Lot. Shock.

But really, Ken, how bad is it? How blind are we really? Pretty blind to what is going on in plain sight all around us. What we see taking place today in technology is not new but a repeat of what was going on before the flood. Once again there is talk of altering the human genome, ostensibly in the name of science or defense, but is it really?

There is a race going on right now among the nations of the world to be the first to develop a super soldier. A modified superhuman with a mix of genetic alterations as well as cybernetic enhancements. This country is no different.

Scientists have proposed ideas for neurological and physical enhancements of soldiers at the genetic level to help build resistance to battle fatigue, enhance sensing and monitoring of the battlefield, aid faster recovery, and endure extreme conditions and extended operations. Ideally, these enhancements would increase force ability to adapt and adjust to changing battlefield conditions and conduct major operations using a smaller force by creating a soldier who is stronger, faster, has more endurance, and is better protected against unpredictable enemy tactics. (Buchner 2013, 7)

From neuralink.com we discover that work has already begun to “Create a generalized brain interface to restore autonomy to those with unmet medical needs today and unlock human potential tomorrow.” (Neuralink 2024) For those with certain types of injuries or deficits, this looks like a solution with promise. But, as with all things, there is also a negative side as well. This brings up the whole idea of what is human and does one cease being human once enhanced with non-human DNA or cybernetically enhanced to interface with various networks. Is the move once again, to do away with what defines human? Didn't we go through a flood over this?

Through the use of neuroprosthetic devices that create employees who are permanently connected to their workplace's digital ecosystems. Such persons may possess enhanced perception, memory, and abilities to manipulate physical and virtual environments and to link with human and synthetic minds to form cybernetic networks that can be both 'supersocial' and 'postsocial.' However, such neuroprosthetics may also create a sense of inauthenticity, vulnerability to computer viruses and hacking, financial burdens, and questions surrounding ownership of intellectual property produced using implants. Moreover, those populations who do and do not adopt neuroprostheses may come to inhabit increasingly incompatible and mutually incomprehensible digital ecosystems. Here we propose a cybernetic model for understanding how neuroprosthetics can either facilitate human beings' participation in posthuman informational ecosystems—or undermine their health, information security, and autonomy. (Gladden 2016, 32)

Welcome to the days of Noah. These are signs pointing to the nearness of the second coming of Jesus Christ. His returning to take the church home to be with Him is imminent. If we see shadows like this, we know and must look up for his return for us is close.

One more thing. “Noah's testimony was largely unheeded. There was no great revival before the flood.” (De Haan 1997, 115)



About the days of Lot. Lot was the nephew of Abraham and if Abraham had followed the word of the Lord, he would have been left back in Mesopotamia and not brought along to Canaan with Abraham. That would have prevented the future problems we see in the scriptures involving Moab and Ammon. A point was reached where Lot had to leave.

Genesis 13:5–7

“Now Lot, who was traveling with Abram, also had flocks, herds, and tents. But the land could not support them while they were living side by side. Because their possessions were so great, they were not able to live alongside one another. So there were quarrels between Abram’s herdsmen and Lot’s herdsmen. (Now the Canaanites and the Perizzites were living in the land at that time.)” (NET 2nd ed.)

Abraham decided it was time to part ways with Lot. He offered to Lot his choice of location.

Genesis 13:10–12

“Lot looked up and saw the whole region of the Jordan. He noticed that all of it was well-watered (this was before the LORD obliterated Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, all the way to Zoar. Lot chose for himself the whole region of the Jordan and traveled toward the east. So the relatives separated from each other. Abram settled in the land of Canaan, but Lot settled among the cities of the Jordan plain and pitched his tents next to Sodom.” (NET 2nd ed.)

Lot opted for the area to the east of the Jordan and the cities there.

Over time, Lot ceased to be salt and light and became more and more part of the governing body of Sodom. He compromised.

God warned Abraham what was about to happen in Sodom. The believer was warned and knew ahead of time what was about to take place. Lot was not as faithful though as Abraham, and he has no idea until two angels call on him.

He was living right in the middle of a culture on the verge of judgement and didn’t even recognize it was doomed. But he was bothered by what was going on. Sounds like today.

2 Peter 2:4–10

“For if God didn’t spare the angels who sinned but cast them into hell (Tartarus) and delivered them in chains of utter darkness to be kept for judgment; and if he didn’t spare the ancient world, but **protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others**, when he brought the flood on the world of the ungodly; and if he reduced the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes and condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is coming to the ungodly; and if **he rescued righteous Lot, distressed by the depraved behavior of the immoral** (for as that righteous man lived among them day by day, his righteous soul was tormented by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)—then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment, especially those who follow the polluting desires of the flesh and despise authority. Bold, arrogant people! They are not afraid to slander the glorious ones;” (CSB)

I hear folks today lamenting the condition of our nation and how we need to turn back to Jesus, but then do nothing about taking the logical next step to make that happen. We would rather sit back and make comments on how someone else tried to do that instead.

Lot made several bad decisions that snowballed into worse ones. He found himself living in a culture that was at war with itself and involved in sinful practices that we see being mirrored and extolled in our culture today. Confusion with sexuality and living a lifestyle attached to that confusion was something subject to judgement from God. In fact, He considers this to be an abomination. Or to put it another way,



to be doing something defiling and detestable that results in wrath from God; “something or someone as essentially unique in the sense of being “dangerous,” “sinister,” and “repulsive” to another individual.” (Vine, Unger and White Jr. 1996, 1)

Those things which God calls an abomination, the culture of Sodom and Gomorrah considered to be worthwhile activities. There is more to this than simply same sex relationships, but that was the primary issue in the text. We see God’s attitude towards this sin in Leviticus.

Leviticus 18:22

“You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination.” (ESV)

Deuteronomy 22:5

“A woman shall not wear a man’s garment, nor shall a man put on a woman’s cloak, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD your God.” (ESV)

1 Corinthians 6:9–11

“Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.” (ESV)

Lot’s presence was a delaying factor for judgement, but his presence did not prevent it. The simple fact that at present, the church still is here on earth, prevents the judgement of God falling on this planet. The angels had to drag Lot and his family out of town first.

The culture of Sodom and Gomorrah accepted the sin as normal behavior. Here is the thing, our culture has also done the same. Just because the culture is okay with a sin or sins, does not mean that God has changed His mind about them.

As Paul told us in 1 Corinthians 6, some in the Corinthian church used to engage in the same lifestyle, until they met Jesus Christ. As a result of following Jesus, they have now been washed in His blood and set free. The Holy Spirit came into them to live, and He is the one who began changing them, something He still does today.

The presence of Lot retarded and held back the destruction of Sodom, but it did not prevent it. God had promised that until Lot was safely out, He would not destroy the city of Sodom. He had promised that until Noah was safe, the flood would not come. While neither the flood nor the destruction of Sodom could come until Noah and Lot were safe, nevertheless the judgment of God did fall when finally they were taken out in safety. Noah is the type of the spiritual believer; Lot is the type of the carnal believer. (De Haan 1997, 116)

What we see with Lot is a type of the rapture from the perspective of someone who is not looking for the rapture to take place anytime soon. The wrath of God could not come down until Lot and his family were out of the way.

Genesis 19:15–16

“At daybreak the angels urged Lot on: “Get up! Take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be swept away in the punishment of the city.” But he hesitated. Because of the LORD’s compassion for him, the men grabbed his hand, his wife’s hand, and the hands of his two daughters. They brought him out and left him outside the city.” (CSB)



There are those who are looking for Jesus to return. They will not be caught off guard. Then there are those who are believers but are too embedded in the culture and will be a bit surprised at what takes place. And there are also those, who say they believe, but do not know Jesus. In Revelation, we learn of a church that is characteristic of many churches here in the last days. Unfortunately, this Laodicean church is in denial and Jesus is on the outside knocking on the door.

As the church, we are looking for the Day of Christ, not the Day of the Lord. The Day of Christ is a day of triumph, and for the true church, there are seven things anticipated.

Day of Christ

- the last days for the Church,
- the resurrection of the bodies of the saints,
- the translation of living saints,
- the judgment seat of Christ,
- the marriage of the Lamb,
- the return of the Church with Christ, and
- the reign of the Church with Christ. (Chafer 1993, 374)

The last days for the church are not the same as we see regarding end times and end of the age. But we are familiar with it.

Those Scriptures which set forth the last days for the Church give no consideration to political or world conditions but are confined to the Church itself.

- These Scriptures picture men as departing from the faith (1 Tim. 4:1–2).
- There will be a manifestation of characteristics which belong to unregenerate men, though it is under the profession of “a form of godliness” (cf. 2 Tim. 3:1–5).
- The indication is that, having denied the power of the blood of Christ (cf. 2 Tim. 3:5 with Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 1:23–24; 2 Tim. 4:2–4), the leaders in these forms of righteousness will be unregenerate men from whom nothing more spiritual than this could proceed (cf. 1 Cor. 2:14).
- The following is a partial list of the passages which present the truth respecting the last days of the Church: 1 Timothy 4:1–3; 2 Timothy 3:1–5; 4:3–4; James 5:1–8; 2 Peter 2:1–22; 3:3–6; Jude 1:1–25. (Chafer 1993, 375)

We have no signs for the imminent rapture of the church. But we do have signs, or rather warnings, about the condition of the church as Jesus returns.

Last Days of the Church

These conditions center around a system of denials.

- There is a denial of God (Luke 17:26; 2 Tim. 3:4–5),
- a denial of Christ (1 John 2:18; 1 John 4:3; 2 Pet. 2:6),
- a denial of Christ’s return (2 Pet. 3:3–4),
- a denial of the faith (1 Tim. 4:1–2; Jude 3),
- a denial of sound doctrine (2 Tim. 4:3–4),
- a denial of the separated life (2 Tim. 3:1–7),
- a denial of Christian liberty (1 Tim. 4:3–4);
- a denial of morals (2 Tim. 3:1–8, 13; Jude 18),
- a denial of authority (2 Tim. 3:4).



This condition at the close of the age is seen to coincide with the state within the Laodicean Church, before which Christ must stand to seek admission. In view of its close it is not surprising that the age is called an “evil age” in Scripture. (Pentecost 1958, 155)

Laodicea lurks inside every church today. We see some churches fully overtaken by this “spirit.” They are the ones seriously resembling the picture drawn by Dr. Pentecost.

Jesus was clear in His letter to this church.

Revelation 3:15–21

“I know what you have done; I know that you are neither cold nor hot. How I wish you were either one or the other! But because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I am going to spit you out of my mouth! You say, ‘I am rich and well off; I have all I need.’ But you do not know how miserable and pitiful you are! You are poor, naked, and blind. I advise you, then, to buy gold from me, pure gold, in order to be rich. Buy also white clothing to dress yourself and cover up your shameful nakedness. Buy also some ointment to put on your eyes, so that you may see. I rebuke and punish all whom I love. Be in earnest, then, and turn from your sins. Listen! I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with them, and they will eat with me. To those who win the victory I will give the right to sit beside me on my throne, just as I have been victorious and now sit by my Father on his throne.” (GNB)

When Jesus answered questions on the Mount of Olives, He provided a clear picture of the world prior to the second coming of Jesus. The picture of the days of Noah in Matthew 24 and the days of Lot in Luke 17 provides for us the examples of a previous rescue. One a picture of the rapture, the other, those events beginning pre-rapture but then accelerating once the rapture has taken place.

When Paul came to Thessalonica, he had Timothy with him. Timothy heard the teaching about the rapture and knew the details associated with the imminent return of Jesus Christ. Later, Paul, in his letter to Timothy, draws a clear picture of the state of the world in the final run up to the second coming. Doing so, he provides us a glimpse of the days of Noah and what the world would look like in the time of Jesus coming to take His church home.

2 Timothy 3:1–5

“You should know this, Timothy, that in the last days there will be very difficult times. For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred. They will be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others and have no self-control. They will be cruel and hate what is good. They will betray their friends, be reckless, be puffed up with pride, and love pleasure rather than God. They will act religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly. Stay away from people like that!” (NLT)

When Jesus does return to rapture His church, the program of the church ends. There will be no more added to the church after that point. The focus shifts back to Israel and suddenly we are back in Daniel 9:27 looking for that event to take place. Once the 7-year treaty is signed, then the identity of the antichrist will be known. It is that treaty that will be broken at the midpoint of the Tribulation resulting in the remnant running to the hills to be protected from the judgement going on, just as Noah was protected during the flood.

The focus change is clearly reflected in the change seen in Revelation between chapter 3 and 4.

Once we see the open door in heaven and John told to come up here, there is no more reference to the church. “In Revelation 4–18, John does not mention the church once by that name or by any other term distinctive to the believers of the present age. It is remarkable and totally unexpected that John would



shift from detailed instructions for the Church to absolute silence about the Church for the subsequent 15 chapters if, in fact, the Church continued into the Tribulation.” (Mayhue 2001, 9)

There is one more rapture example I want to mention, Elijah.

2 Kings 2:1

“The time had come for the LORD to take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind. Elijah and Elisha were traveling from Gilgal,” (CSB)

Elisha refused to leave Elijah’s side and walked with him to his appointment with God. We pick up in their walking discussion in verse 11.

2 Kings 2:11

“As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire with horses of fire suddenly appeared and separated the two of them. Then Elijah went up into heaven in the whirlwind.” (CSB)

As God had formerly taken Enoch away, so that he did not taste of death (see at Gen. 5:24), so did He also suddenly take Elijah away from Elisha, and carry him to heaven without dying. (Keil and Delitzsch 1996, 208)

Just as with Enoch, Elijah was changed and taken into heaven in a fiery war chariot.

Elijah was carried by the Lord to heaven in a fiery storm, the symbol of the judicial righteousness of God. “As he was an unparalleled champion for the honour of the Lord, a fiery war-chariot was the symbol of his triumphal procession into heaven” (O. v. Gerlach). (Keil and Delitzsch 1996, 209)

Was Elijah being delivered from some pending judgement? No, but his being taken up in a chariot normally seen in a triumph is significant. He entered into heaven in a magnificent manner and was rewarded upon entry.

This, too, foreshadows one of the purposes of the yet-future pretribulation rapture. Believers will not only escape the judgment of the tribulation; they will also receive the blessing of following the Lord. However, just as men questioned the disappearance of the prophet Elijah, so they will likely question the rapture of the church. (Hitchcock and Hindson 2018, 49)

Once the church is raptured, all future events concerning the day of the Lord will begin to unfold. These future events concern Israel, the nations of the world, the angelic realm, effectively the entire creation, but not the church. Once the church is removed nothing will be spared from His coming wrath. (Olander 2009, 34)

But you must be part of His church. Have you trusted in Jesus Christ and His work on the cross to save you from your sin. If the answer is yes, you are in.

But if the answer is no, then you still have time to get in. All you must do is believe.

Romans 10:9–13

“If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For “Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.”” (NLT)



Works Cited

- Brannan, Rick, Ken M. Penner, Michael Aubrey, Israel Loken, and Isaiah Hoogendyk. 2020. *The Lexham English Septuagint*. Second Edition. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.
- Buchner, Christina M. 2013. *Biologically Fit: Using Biotechnology to Create a Better Soldier-Super Soldier, Posthumans, Bioconservatives, Pioprogressives, Transhumanists, JASON*. Kindle Edition. Monterey, CA: US DOD Naval Postgraduate School, Progressive Management Publications.
- Chafer, Lewis Sperry. 1993. *Systematic Theology*. Vol. 4. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications.
- Charles, R. H., and W. O. E. Oesterley. 1917. *The Book of Enoch*. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.
- De Haan, M. R. 1997. *The Signs of the Times*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications.
- Gladden, Matthew E. 2016. *Posthuman Management: Creating Effective Organizations in an Age of Social Robotics, Ubiquitous AI, Human Augmentation, and Virtual Worlds*. Second Edition. Indianapolis, IN: Synthypnion Press LLC.
- Heiser, Michael S. 2017. *Reversing Hermon: Enoch, The Watchers & The Forgotten Mission of Jesus Christ*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.
- Hitchcock, Mark, and Ed Hindson. 2018. *Can We Still Believe in the Rapture*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers.
- Jeremiah, David. 2001. *Heroes of the Faith: Study Guide*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers.
- . 2023. *The Great Disappearance: 31 Ways to Be Rapture Ready*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.
- Keil, Carl Friedrich, and Franz Delitzsch. 1996. *The Book of Kings*. Vol. 3, in *Commentary on the Old Testament*, by Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, translated by James Martin. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson.
- Mayhue, Richard L. 2001. *Snatched Before the Storm! A Case for Pretribulationism*. The Woodlands, TX: Kress Christian Publications.
- Neuralink. 2024. "Our Mission." *Neuralink*. Accessed February 14, 2024. <https://neuralink.com/>.
- Olander, David. 2009. *The Greatness of the Rapture: The Pre-Day of the Lord Rapture*. Edited by Kenneth R. Cooper and Christopher Cone. Fort Worth, TX: Tyndale Seminary Press.
- Pentecost, J. Dwight. 1958. *Things to Come: A Study in Biblical Eschatology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.
- Vine, W. E., Merrill F. Unger, and William White Jr. 1996. *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*. Nashville, TN: T. Nelson.