

My View Of The End Times 4

The Rapture - Matt. 24, 1 Thess. 4-5 & Rev. 6-8

Many Christians believe in the PreTrib Rapture doctrine which is the belief that Jesus is going to return twice. They say that the first time is in 1 Thess. 4-5 when He will come secretly in the clouds to take all Christians to heaven before the Great Tribulation. And the second time is after the Tribulation when He will come to the earth for the war of Armageddon (Matt. 24). However, when we examine 1 Thess. 4-5 and Matt. 24 we find that they are parallel passages, that is, they are both talking about the same thing - the one and only return of Jesus.

The following list shows ten similarities between the two passages:

- 1) Both passages speak about Jesus coming from heaven - 1 Thess. 4:16 & Matt. 24:30.
- 2) Both say that there are angels present - 1 Th. 4:16, 3:13 & Matt. 24:31.
- 3) Both speak about a trumpet call - 1 Thess. 4:16 & Matt. 24:31.
- 4) Both say believers will be gathered to Jesus - 1 Thess. 4:17 & Matt. 24:31, 40-41.
- 5) Both mention clouds - 1 Thess. 4:17 & Matt. 24:30.
- 6) Both say that the time is unknown - 1 Thess. 5:1-2, & Matt. 24:36.
- 7) Both say that Jesus will come like a thief - 1 Thess. 5:2, 4 & Matt. 24:43.
- 8) Both say unbelievers will be caught unaware - 1 Thess. 5:3 & Matt. 24:37-39.
- 9) Both say that believers are to watch - 1 Thess. 5:6 & Matt. 24:42, 25.
- 10) Both warn against drunkenness - 1 Thess. 5:7 & Matt. 24:49.

These ten similarities are more than enough to show that Matt. 24 and 1 Thess. 4-5 are parallel passages. When two people give evidence about something, it's highly unlikely that they will use the same words, or speak about the exact same points, but the similarities in their accounts would make it obvious that they were talking about the same thing. This is how it is with these two passages. In 1 Thess. 4-5, Paul described, in his own words, the same things that Jesus spoke about in Matt. 24. So, there are not two returns of Jesus but only one where He raptures all Christians out of the Tribulation, just before the Day Of The Lord begins (Matt. 24:27-31). (At the end of this article, there is a link to a chart which shows sixteen similarities between these two passages.)

There is also a clear, sequential parallel between Matt. 24 and Rev. 6-8 as the following shows:

- First, both passages talk about wars and famines - Matt. 24:6-7 & Rev. 6:3-6.
- Then both mention the Great Tribulation - Matt. 24:9, 21-22 & Rev. 6:7-11.
- Then they talk about a cosmic sign in the heavens - Matt. 24:29 & Rev. 6:12-17.
- Then Christians are saved out of the Tribulation - Matt. 24:22, 31 & Rev. 7:9-14.
- And then the wrath of God comes - Matt. 24:30, Matt. 24:37-39 & Rev. 8:1-7.

This sequence of similarities shows that Matt. 24 and Rev. 6-8 are also parallel passages. This of course means that all three passages, Matt. 24, Rev. 6-8 and 1 Thess. 4-5, are describing the one and only return of Jesus. So there is no secret, Pre-Tribulation Rapture.

When Jesus returns to rapture Christians, it will be far from a secret. First the sun and moon will be darkened, the stars will fall and the heavens will be shaken. Then His coming will be announced with a trumpet call, a shout, and with the voice of the archangel and He will appear in the clouds like lightning, with power and great glory. All the world will know about it as Rev 1:7 tells us, *“Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him.”* The nations will wail and mourn because they know that the Day Of The Lord has arrived and that God's wrath is about to come down on them.

The next article will be on coming like a thief and watching. Amen.

The following link is for a chart comparing Matt. 24, 1 Thess. 4-5 and Rev. 6-8 -
http://www.christianissues.biz/pdf-bin/endtimes/comparing_thess_matt_rev.pdf

This article can be downloaded as a PDF or an MP3 from -
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