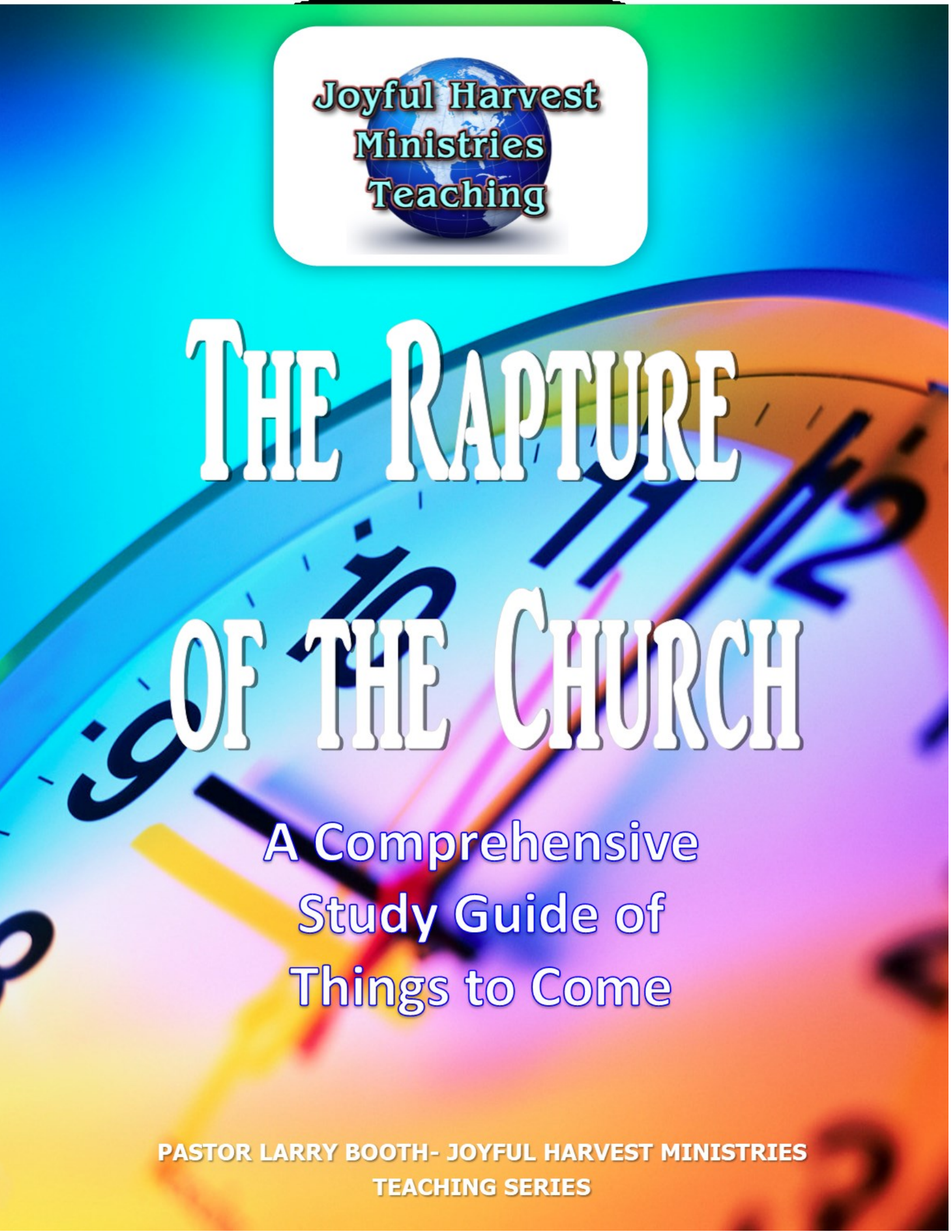

The Rapture of the Church

A Comprehensive Study Guide of Things to Come

PASTOR LARRY BOOTH- JOYFUL HARVEST MINISTRIES

TEACHING SERIES

THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH: A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY GUIDE
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STUDY GUIDE

JOYFUL HARVEST TEACHING SERIES

STUDY: The Rapture

INDEX

What is the Rapture?

1. **Introduction……..……...……....1**
2. **The Day of the Lord described in Scripture……..……11**
3. **What is the Rapture?…...…….....…19**
4. **What is the purpose of the Rapture?……....……...27**
5. **What happens at the Rapture? Resurrection…..……....35**

   Part 2&3- The dead are raised…....…….…….…....41
6. **Part 4- The living are translated……....…….....59**

Things to Come

7. **The Rapture vs. the Day of the Lord…….……..……67**
8. **Things to come: Covenant, Reformed, and**

   Dispensational: What do they mean?……..…….....75
9. **Things to come: Premillennialism……..…….……...83**
10. **Things to come: Dispensationalism……..……..…...97**
11. **Dispensational theology contrasted……...…...…...…115**
12. **Things to come: Preterism explained…….....…119**

The Timing of the Rapture

13. The timing of the raptures-Future raptures……..…...131

14. The timing: Partial raptures theory……..…..…...…149

15. The timing: Partial rapture theory cont....……..…..……161

16. The timing: The question of the last trump……..……173

Paul's Revelation

17. Paul's Revelation- Mysteries explained……..185

18. The marriage analogy……...……203

19. The marriage analogy continued……..…..……..211

20. Rapture typology……...…..225

Supplemental- The Imminent coming of Christ….....239

21. The Rapture is still imminent…...…….……..…….245

What are the signs?

22. What are the signs? Matthew 24 & Luke 17……..……253

23. Supplemental- The Sheep and Goats Judgment……..……267

23. The days of Noah vs. the days of Lot……..…..……284

24. What are the signs? Luke 21……..……..285

25. What are the signs? Mark 13……..…….……299

26. What are the signs? John 13-17……..……..……313

Hard Passages

27. Hard passages- 2 Thess.2/ The departure……..…….321

28. Hard passages Part 2- The restrainer…….....339

29. Hard passages Part 3- Daniel's 70 weeks…..…….....…....353

30. Ten keys to understanding Daniel 9……..…….…….389

Why I believe in the Pre-Trib

31. Why I believe in the pre-trib./Crowns……..……..393

32. The resurrection of the Old Testament saints……..……...405

33. Why I believe in the pre-trib./Jewish wedding……..…..419

34. Why I believe in the pre-trib./Other positions……...449

35. Proof that the Rapture doctrine is not new…….……...439

36. Why I believe in the pre-trib./Israel & Church……..…457

37. More points from other authors…….…….463

38. Another possible interpretation of Revelation 12……...473

Authors and works cited…….…….....……501

STUDY GUIDE

JOYFUL HARVEST TEACHING SERIES

A Study of Things to Come by Larry Booth

STUDY: The Rapture of the Church

Chapter 1

Introduction:

I. Intro: This chapter is a one lesson overview of part of what we will cover

Jack Van Impe says prophecy is "History written in advance." What a great way to describe the study of things to come!

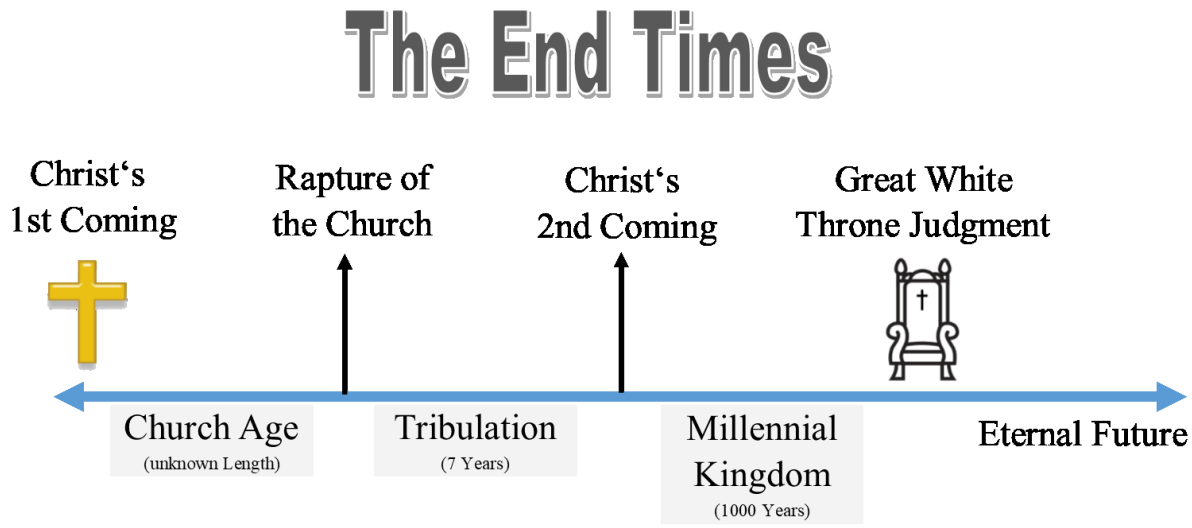


Chart by Larry Booth

A. We live in last days

1 Timothy 4:1 (KJV)

[1] Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

Israel during the Tribulation period –

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 (KJV)

[1] But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.
3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

B. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise-What promise? The promise of a physical return at the Day of the Lord.

Acts 1:9-11 (KJV)
9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.
10 And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;
11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

C. Peter's foretells of a day

One day is as a thousand years. The "day" of the Lord last at least a thousand years and begins with Jesus' physical return to the Earth and ends with the "day of God" when he reforms a new heaven and earth after the great White throne judgment-Rev. 19-22

2 Peter 3:8-16 (KJV)
8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. Hosea 6:2
9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.
10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.
11 *Seeing* then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness,
12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?
13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.
14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.
15 And account *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;
16 As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.

What was hard to understand about Paul's teaching? Wouldn't it be the same teaching concerning the Day of the Lord as what Peter had understood? Paul taught something

different-The Rapture revelation teaching of a departure happening before the Second Coming of Christ.

D. Paul's revelation of the Rapture- Peter said was hard to understand-why?

1. Paul received special revelation by Jesus himself of a catching away of the Church before the Day of the Lord happening.

1 Thessalonians 4:15 (HCSB)
15 For we say this to you by a revelation from the Lord: We who are still alive at the Lord's coming will certainly have no advantage over those who have fallen asleep.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (KJV)
13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.
14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.
15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.
16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:
17 Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.
18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

2. Paul taught we would go before the wrath

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 (KJV)
1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.
2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.
3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.
4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.
5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.
6 Therefore let us not sleep, as *do* others; but let us watch and be sober.
7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.
8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.
9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath (or the day of the Lord), but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,
10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.
11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

Some teach the partial rapture theory where some Christians will not make the Rapture because of personal sin. Whether we as Christians are spiritually awake or spiritually asleep, we are not appointed to wrath. See above in Luke 21:35-36 Jesus promised us to

escape all of the wrath and to stand before the throne. This is God's grace that makes us worthy to go.

3. The Rapture happens in a moment. We will be transformed into a new body.

1 Corinthians 15:51-52 (KJV)
51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,
52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

E. The answer: What Paul taught was different than what all the prophets taught about the return of the Lord-The Rev. 19 event is what they understood

Revelation 19:11-14 (HCSB)
11 Then I saw heaven opened, and there was a white horse. Its rider is called Faithful and True, and He judges and makes war in righteousness.
12 His eyes were like a fiery flame, and many crowns were on His head. He had a name written that no one knows except Himself.
13 He wore a robe stained with blood, and His name is the Word of God.
14 The armies that were in heaven followed Him on white horses, wearing pure white linen.

The saints are with Him so the Rapture has already happened by this point. In fact they are in heaven at the very beginning of the Tribulation period in Rev. 4. Revelation 19 is the physical return of the Lord at the Day of the Lord.

Pre mil., post and a-millennial- all believe Jesus is coming back. The question is: *when?*

II. What is the Rapture? A departure of the Church before the Day of the Lord happens- Not a new concept

A. Rapture Defined:

1. "The word "rapture" simply means "to transport from one place to another." The scriptural expressions equated with rapture are "caught up" (1 Th. 4:17; 2 Cor. 12:4); "receive you unto myself" (Jn. 14:3); and "come up hither" (Rev. 4:1; 11:12)." **Dake**- *The Rapture and the Second Coming of Christ*.

2. "Caught up" To seize or snatch away- Greek word is *Harpazo*- Latin translation is Rapiemur or Rapio- 1 Thess. 4:14-18.

1 Thessalonians 4:17 (KJV)
17 Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

3. Called the Blessed Hope- Titus 2:13

Titus 2:13 (KJV)
13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

Clearly two events here: the *blessed Hope*, and *the appearing*, or *coming* of the Lord. It is also called, "the *Day of the Lord*." Truthfully the coming of the Lord is in at least two or three parts, and likened to a harvest (James5:7).

4. Greek Harpazo is also translated as "To be taken by force"- Acts 23:10, Matt. 11:12

Acts 23:10 (KJV)
10 And when there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces of them, commanded the soldiers to go down, and to take him by force from among them, and to bring *him* into the castle.

Matthew 11:12 (KJV)
12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

5. "The Rapture is an event that could occur at any moment. In that split second, all who have personally trusted in Jesus Christ their savior-both the living and the dead- will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. They will go with Him back up to heaven and return back to the earth with Him at least seven years later at His Second Coming." **Mark Hitchcock**- *Could the Rapture happen today?*[1]

6. "The Rapture of the Church is called "the Coming of the Lord" but never the Second Coming of Christ. At the Rapture Christ does not appear visibly to those on the Earth, but He comes in the air above the Earth to catch up or rapture the dead and living saints who rise together to meet the Lord in the air…The rapture is purely a New Testament doctrine and was first revealed to Paul as a special revelation, (1 Cor. 15:51-58), while the Second Coming of Christ is not only a New Testament doctrine, but it is one of the chief themes of the Old Testament…"[2] **Finis Dake**- *God's plan for man*

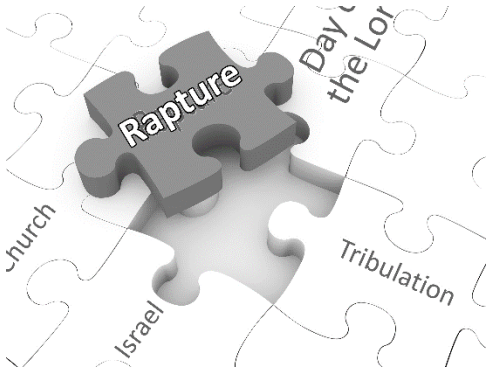
7. The Rapture is not the Second Coming advent of Christ mentioned above.

B. The puzzle pieces that make the whole picture of the end times- We have to look at all the Scriptures not just one piece.

1. We should not be ignorant of the times and seasons:

[1] Hitchcock, Mark. (2005). Could the Rapture Happen Today? (p.9). The Crown Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.
[2] Finis J. Dake, *God's Plan for Man*, (Lawrenceville, GA: Dake Publishing, Inc., 2004), WORD*search* CROSS e-book, 840.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-5 (KJV)
1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.
2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.
3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.
4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.
5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.



Here we see two groups of people: the brethren, and those Paul called "they." One would escape the Day of the Lord and the others would not.

2. The prerequisite to make the Rapture

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (KJV)
13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.
14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

V. 14- Criteria for meeting the pre-Tribulation Rapture of the church- "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again-Born again". We believe Jesus will come before the Tribulation period starts-More proofs of this later. The next great event is not a messiah showing up to save the world- It's the Rapture of the church leaving this world.

3. We all know and believe that Jesus is coming, the question is WHEN?

III. What is the purpose of the Rapture? The removal of the Church before God's wrath is poured out (See Lesson 3)

1. To keep the saints from God's wrath upon the earth- Isaiah 13:9-13, 1 Thess. 1:9-10- To save those who wait for the son to return, 1 Thess. 5:9- No set time for the church to go through the wrath

Isaiah 13:9-13 (KJV)
9 Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.
10 For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.
11 And I will punish the world for *their* evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.

12 I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.
13 Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.

Revelation 3:10 (KJV)
10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 (KJV)
9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;
10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

1 Thessalonians 5:9 (KJV)
9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

2. Luke 21:34-36- To escape all the things that lead up to His Second Coming and to stand before him?

Luke 21:34-36 (KJV)
34 And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and *so* that day come upon you unawares.
35 For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.
36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

3. To receive the fruit of the early and latter rain- James 5:7

James 5:6-7 (KJV)
6 Ye have condemned *and* killed the just; *and* he doth not resist you.
7 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

In a field there are more than one gleanings to "harvest" the field. A Harvest has many gleanings and the coming of the Lord here, is likened to the harvest. A field can be harvested two, three and even four times in one season. Even grapes are harvested only when they are ripe at different times during one season. If this is true then why can't there be an early and latter rains that bring forth multiple gleanings of harvest? The latter rain harvest includes a revival that is poured out even during the Tribulation time where thousands will come to know Christ. There is a need to rescue those out of the Great Tribulation in my opinion.

The early rain is the blessed hope or Rapture, which will occur in "a moment in a twinkling of an eye," and later rain or "the Day of the Lord" where, "every eye" will see Him physically. One He is taking us with him back to heaven for a time, and the other we are with him coming to

bring vengeance on the Antichrist at Christ's appearing. Later we will detail the two events more clearly.

IV. In the last week Jesus gave three teachings:

1. Matthew 24, Mark 13-The last week on the Mount of Olives He taught about Israel during the future Tribulation period and what to do. It ends with His physical return.

   Matthew 24:30 (KJV)
   30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

2. Luke 21- Spoken the same day in the synagogue he told of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. and how to escape it. Luke found this teaching and knew this was a different teaching than Matthew's and made sure it got recorded. Luke does however record also the final days in the Tribulation and Christ's Second Coming. In verse 24 Jesus mentions the times of the Gentiles ending, then after that He would return physically to the Earth. Many people mix Matthew's account with Luke's and confuse everything. Because Luke recorded this, and the Christians were the only ones who heeded it, they escaped Jerusalem's destruction in 70 A.D.

   Luke 21:20-22 (KJV)
   20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.
   21 Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.
   22 For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

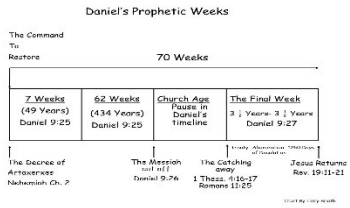
   Promises of the Rapture in Luke 21- Surly Jesus is not suggesting death here.

   Luke 21:35-36 (KJV)
   35 For as a snare shall it (LB-The Tribulation) **come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.**
   36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

3. John 14- The Upper Room at the Last Supper- His last message was to the church. He taught about the Rapture and the church. He stated "I'm going to leave, come back and take you to heaven." Nowhere does he say that He will touch the Earth or appear physically when he comes to get us. This is the Rapture! If there is no Rapture where is this Scripture fulfilled?

   John 14:1-3 (KJV)
   1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.
   2 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.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.



V. 70 weeks of years (490) are determined and one week of years (7 years) has not been fulfilled yet. (See chart- Pg. 364)

Daniel 9:24-27 (KJV)

24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.
25 Know therefore and understand, *that* from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince *shall be* seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.
26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof *shall be* with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.
27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

A. The Tribulation is the last 7 year period for Israel to finish the transgression- Hosea 5:15- When they openly repent the Lord will rescue them.

B. It begins when the Antichrist "confirms the covenant" for one last week of years

Daniel 9:27 (HCSB)
27 He will make a firm covenant with many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and offering. And the abomination of desolation will be on a wing of the temple until the decreed destruction is poured out on the desolator."

C. The Antichrist will break his covenant with Israel in the middle of the Tribulation

Matthew 24:15 (KJV)
15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

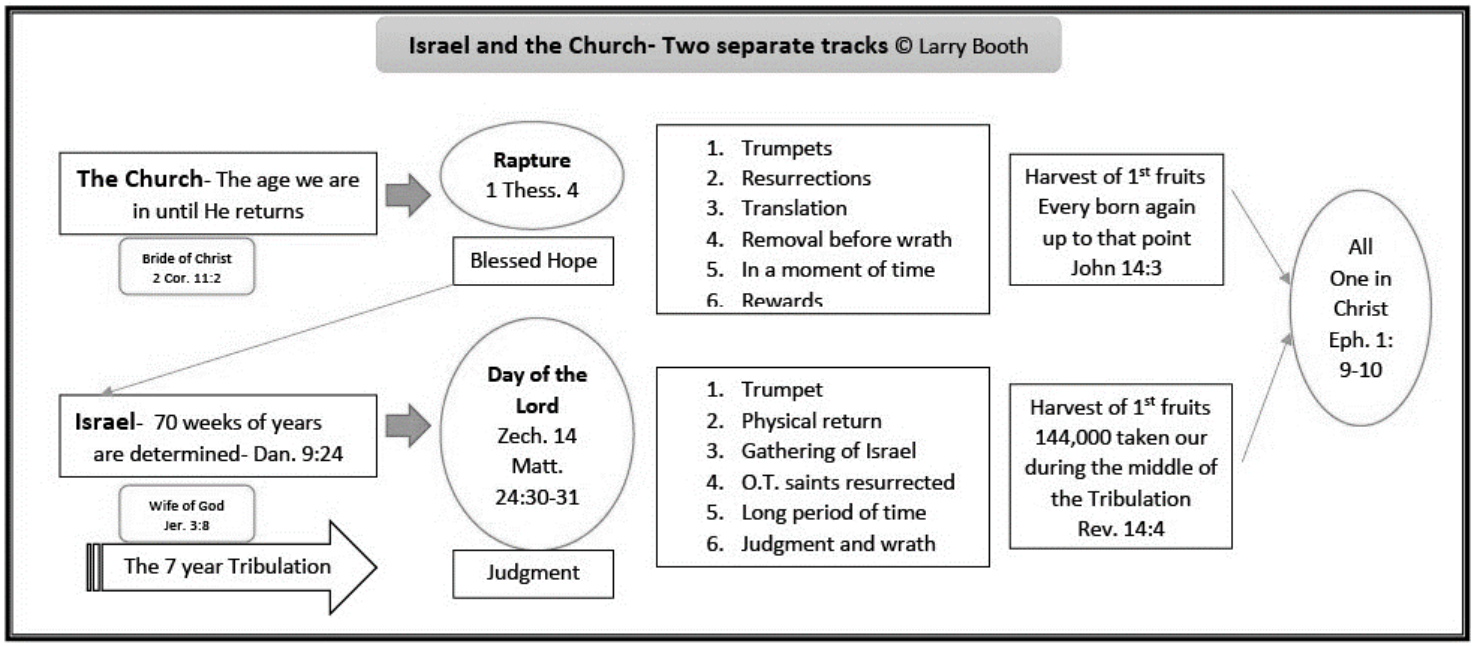
2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 (KJV)
3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;
4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

D. The Day of the Lord is not the Rapture and takes place at the end of the Tribulation period as taught by Jesus- They won't be looking for Him

Matthew 24:48-51 (KJV)
48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;
49 And shall begin to smite *his* fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;
50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and in an hour that he is not aware of,
51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 25:31-34 (KJV)
31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:
32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats:
33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.
34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

VI. The Rapture and the Day of the Lord are two separate events- (see chapter 7)

2 Thessalonians 2:1-2 (KJV)
1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him,
2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ (early translations read "day of the Lord") is at hand.

VII. Israel and the Church are on two separate tracks