

The Case of the Missing Saints
(A Biblical Investigation into the Mystery of the Rapture)
Rockey Jackson - November 24, 1999
Section 12 of 13

Part Two: Yes, but what about...?

If you've made it this far, you're probably wondering about all of those persuasive arguments for other positions concerning when the Rapture will occur. Proverbs 18:17 tells us that: "He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him." In this section we'll take a look at a few of the arguments which are commonly brought up for other positions and see if we can provide an adequate rebuttal to them.

Isn't the Church removed before the Tribulation?

One argument for the Pre-Tribulation Rapture based on a Greek word study goes something like this. The Greek word for the church, *ekklesia*, occurs many times in the first three chapters of Revelation and then is never used again in the rest of the book. Therefore showing that the church is not on the earth during the tribulation since it was so prominent before the tribulation, but isn't mentioned in it.

This is a very scholarly sounding argument since it is based on a linguistic study of the text. Since very few people are students of New Testament Greek and can't study it for themselves, they of necessity must take the scholar's word for it. However, when we take a critical look at this argument, we find that it contains a fatal flaw of logic. Refer back to my outline of Revelation. The first three chapters contain the revelation of the risen Christ and his letters to the seven churches of Asia Minor. Since He is addressing specific historical churches of the day, it is not surprising that the Lord uses the word translated "church" quite often in this section. From chapter four on, however, the subject changes to the redemption of the earth, the millennial reign of Christ and the new heavens and the new earth. It should not be surprising that when the church is no longer the subject, that the word for it is no longer used.

To draw an analogy, let's say that when my daughter was in college she wrote me a letter. On page one she wrote about all of the plans she had for school until the end of the term. It's probable that she would mention the college several times. If on page two she changed the subject to her plans for summer vacation, she probably wouldn't mention the school at all. Now I doubt that anyone would consider me a great scholar if I jumped to the conclusion that at the end of May my daughter's college would cease to exist. But, that is exactly what this argument does to the church in Revelation. The analysis needs to go a step deeper to determine whether or not the subject has changed. We know by our study that the subject has indeed changed.

Taking a different tact into the study of the Greek word *ekklesia*, it has been transliterated into our language as *ecclesia*. In its many forms it refers to church things, especially the organization with its principles, practices and activities. In our common usage, when we speak about the church our usual reference is to the buildings we meet in. I will guarantee that our church buildings, organizations, principles, practices and activities will not be raptured. God has no use for them in heaven.

Ecclesia's literal meaning is "called out ones." Its technical meaning in the Christian context is a gathering of the saints, especially for worship. If believers can be found in the Tribulation, then the church, the *ecclesia*, is there by definition. Can we find these people in Revelation in the chapters dealing with the tribulation? Yes!

17 And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ (Rev. 12:17).

12 Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus (Rev. 14:12).

Who are those who obey God's commandments? They are the Jews. Who are those who hold to the testimony of Jesus and remain faithful to Him? They are Christians!

The inclusive term saints is used throughout the Bible for all of God's elect. Specifically in Revelation we find them in the following verses.

7(a) And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them (Rev. 13:7a).

10(b) Here is the patience and the faith of the saints (Rev. 13:10b).

6(a) And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus (Rev. 17:6a).

So, we see that God's elect people, both Christians and Jews are in the tribulation. When the Rapture occurs, it is believers, saints, all of God's elect who will be taken to heaven.

Doesn't the Holy Spirit leave to make way for the Antichrist?

This is not really an argument for a Pre-Tribulation Rapture. It is rather a logical result of Pre-Tribulation Rapture doctrine. A logical deduction cannot be used as a proof for the premise it is derived from. The logic goes something like this. Pre-Tribulation Rapture doctrine states that the Church is removed prior to the Tribulation. The coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost initiated the Church. Therefore, logically, if the Church is removed, it can be deduced that the Holy Spirit will also be removed. This logical deduction is then applied to the following verses we already looked at in 2 Thessalonians.

6 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way (2 Thess. 2:6,7).

The assumption is made that the Holy Spirit is the one who is restraining the lawless one.

We have already shown that the Rapture occurs at the end of the Tribulation while the armies are gathering for the battle of Armageddon. We have also shown that there are Christians in the Tribulation. Having negated both the primary and the secondary premises for this argument, the deduction is also shown to be false. The assumption that follows the deduction is seen then as no more than an unsupported speculation of man.

The Thessalonians were told who was restraining the lawless one. However, this scripture does not reveal his identity to us. I believe that the Holy Spirit will continue His ministry of

convicting the world of sin and empowering the saints to live for the Lord Jesus Christ until the Lord returns.

Isn't the Church seen in heaven dressed in white robes in Rev. 7:9-17?

Many have taught that the Church is seen in heaven with the Lord during the Tribulation based on the following passage in Revelation.

9 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

10 And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

11 And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

12 Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

13 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

15 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

17 For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes (Rev. 7:9-17).

It can be noted here that in verse 14 we are told that these have come out of the great tribulation, not that they came out before the Tribulation. We don't however need to depend just on the wording to understand who these are. We were told specifically who they are when they were given their white robes in Rev. 6:9-11.

9 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

11 And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled (Rev. 6:9-11).

These are certainly God's saints in heaven, but we see that they are in heaven by means of martyrdom and not by means of the Rapture. They are given the white robes of Christ's righteousness to cover them because they have not yet received their resurrected bodies.

Isn't the world evangelized by the 144,000 after the Church is removed?

Another concept that is often taught in conjunction with the Pre-Tribulation Rapture is that after the church is removed, many will be brought to the knowledge of the Lord by 144,000 Jews who become "super" evangelists. We are introduced to these 144,000 when they have the seal of God placed on their foreheads.

1 And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

2 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

4 And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel (Rev. 7:1-4).

Verses 5-8 continue with the catalog of those who are sealed (twelve thousand from each of the tribes of Israel). The next time we see these 144,000 they are in heaven.

1 And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.

2 And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

3 And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

4 These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.

5 And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God (Rev. 14:1-5).

Nowhere are we told what these 144,000 have any particular mission to perform. They are simply identified as firstfruits which have been "redeemed from among men." Since the only way to get to heaven before the Rapture is through death, it would be much more logical to assume that they were sealed unto martyrdom than anything else. Whatever we choose to believe about the 144,000, it should be understood that it is simply our own conjecture and not scriptural fact.

What about the tribulation saints?

Another Pre-Tribulation Rapture teaching says that after the Church is raptured, many who have known about the end times but haven't believed will then believe because of the Rapture. The 144,000 Jews we just dealt with will evangelize others. These new believers then become a

special class of Christians called “tribulation saints.” Well, there will be a period of time the Bible calls the Tribulation and there will be saints in the Tribulation as we have already seen, but the term tribulation saints does not appear in the Bible. The Bible makes no distinction between believers before the Tribulation and those in the Tribulation. This term and concept are nothing more than the invention of those who advocate a Pre-Tribulation Rapture to explain why God’s elect are still found in the Tribulation after they have supposedly been raptured away.

What about the seventieth week of Daniel?

In Daniel 9:24-27 the angel Gabriel delivers a message to Daniel. Gabriel tells him that God has allotted seventy weeks unto Daniel’s people, the Jews, to fulfill His purposes in them. The weeks are weeks of years, or to put it another way each week represents seven years. These seventy weeks (490 years) are further broken up into periods of seven weeks (49 years), sixty-two weeks (434 years) and one week (7 years). The first sixty-nine weeks (483 years) are accounted for in the period between the time Daniel received the message and the time when the Messiah was cut off. This leaves one week (7 years) in which God will use the Jews to demonstrate his purposes in the earth in a special way. This last week is associated with the time when the Anti-Christ makes a seven-year covenant with Israel. There has been a gap of almost two thousand years since the Messiah was cut off and still the last week of years has not happened. I believe that it will be fulfilled just as the prophecy of the first 69 weeks was fulfilled. I believe that it is quite likely that it will be fulfilled within my lifetime.

Many who believe that the rapture will occur before the Tribulation see the church as a gap filler that didn’t exist during the first sixty-nine weeks of the prophecy and must be removed before the last week can be fulfilled. It would take a book to deal with this in any fullness and many books have been written both for and against this position. All I will say about it here is that I have never found conclusive arguments from scripture to convince me that the church must be removed from the earth for this prophecy to be fulfilled. In fact, I find ample evidence in scripture to convince me that not only will the church not be removed, but that believing Jews and Christians will actually be coming together in some form of unity as the end of the age approaches.

First, I see in scripture that the mission of God’s chosen people, Israel, was to bring all of mankind to a knowledge of God. They were also chosen to be the people from whom the Messiah came. Jesus Christ, the Messiah of Israel, died for the sins of all and brought the gift of salvation to all of mankind. When the nation of Israel rejected the Messiah (though not all Jews rejected Him) the task of spreading the gospel fell primarily to the gentiles who soon became the majority of believers in Jesus Christ. Paul deals with this mystery extensively in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh chapters of his letter to the church at Rome. Toward the end of this passage in 11:11-36 he tells us that Israel’s rejection of the Messiah is not final. He likens the gentiles to branches from a wild olive tree that have been grafted onto a domestic olive tree whose root is Christ. The Jews are portrayed as branches that have been broken off from this tree. However, Paul tells us that the natural branches, the Jews, will be grafted back into the tree with us when they come to believe in the Messiah. There is no hint that the gentiles must be removed in order for the Jews to be restored.

Paul also wrote concerning the coming together of the Jews and the gentiles in Christ in his letter to the Ephesians. Here he likens this joining as the coming together of two men into one new man:

14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father (Eph. 2:14-18).

We see this come to fruition during the time of the Tribulation in a couple of passages we have already looked at in Revelation. Here the two groups are referenced together, both those who keep God's commandments and those who have faith in Jesus.

17 And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ (Rev. 12:17).

12 Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus (Rev. 14:12).

Finally, the prophet Isaiah also foresaw his own participation in the resurrection of the just:

19 Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

20 Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.

21 For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain (Is. 26:19-21).

So, it is not necessary for the church to be removed prior to the tribulation for God's purposes to be fulfilled. There is ample Biblical evidence to show that to the contrary all of God's saints, the Jews and the Church (God's elect from every nation, tribe, and tongue), are coming closer together as the end of the age nears.

When will the number of the gentiles be complete?

Another teaching associated with the doctrine of the Pre-Tribulation Rapture is that it will occur when the number of the gentiles is complete. This comes from Paul's letter to the Romans where we're told:

25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in (Rom 11:25).

But have we considered when this will occur. Like the rapture, there is no scripture that says, "The number of the gentiles is now complete." We do know however, what it takes to get saved, repentance and believing in Jesus for salvation.

Can we find a time in the period of the Apocalypse when mankind will no longer repent and turn to our Lord for salvation? Yes, in the time of the Sixth Trumpet we're told:

20 And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:

21 Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts (Rev. 9:20,21).

This lack of repentance leads to the Seventh Trumpet that contains the final seven bowls of God's wrath on the earth. During the pouring out of these bowls, unsaved mankind is given more opportunities to repent, but twice more we are told that they refuse to do so.

8 And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.

9 And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.

10 And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain,

11 And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds (Rev. 16:8-11).

Mankind's continued lack of repentance leads to the Sixth Bowl judgement where the armies of the world are gathered for the battle of Armageddon. As we've seen already, this is the season in which the rapture occurs. The teaching is correct that the rapture will occur when the number of the gentiles is complete, but the assumed pre-tribulation timing is not. For when mankind stops repenting and turning to the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, then He will remove His own from the world. After which, He will return to unrepentant mankind as their conqueror and judge.

Now, I don't mean to suggest that Abner Doubleday was prophetic or that God is a baseball fan. I'm sure that it is just a coincidence, but it appears that for mankind in this age in which we live it will be three strikes and their out. May we labor in the harvest to bring as many of them as possible to salvation before time runs out.

What about the Doctrine of Immediacy?

The doctrine of immediacy says that there is nothing that needs to happen before the Lord returns to take His elect to be with Him. Our Lord could return for us immediately, at any moment. This is a doctrine held by many Pre-Tribulationists. One resultant benefit that is seen to

flow from this doctrine is a state of urgency concerning salvation because at any moment we could find ourselves before the judgment seat of our Lord.

We don't need this doctrine, however, to maintain this urgency. Scriptures like the Parable of the Rich Fool support it just as well:

16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

20 But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God (Luke 12:16-21).

We should never lose sight of the fact that no amount of time has been guaranteed to us and we could at any moment be required to stand before our Lord. Accidents, disease, wars, violence, and natural disasters can all swiftly place us before our Lord. Sometimes babies in their cribs just stop breathing. Even young athletes in their prime, for no apparent reason, have simply crumpled to the ground when God has called them to stand before Him. No, an imminent rapture is not required to be urgent about salvation. We are never more than a heartbeat away from heaven.

What does the Lord say about His immediate return? Throughout His ministry, Jesus continually dealt with the fact that the Jews expected the immediate establishment of the Messianic Kingdom. In response to this, Jesus told them that He would be going away.

11 And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.

12 He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return (Luke 19:11,12).

The passage continues on to tell the story of the talents. A reminder that our Lord expects us to produce fruit while we wait for Him.

John also deals with this subject in his gospel. Peter had asked the Lord what would happen to John. Jesus answered, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" From this a rumor spread that the Lord would return before John died. In his gospel John refuted this assumption.

20 Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?

21 Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?

22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.

23 Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?

24 This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true (John 21:20-24).

I further submit that the entire epistle of Second Thessalonians was specifically written to deal with the problems brought about by an assumption that the Lord's return is imminent. The first chapter introduces the subject. We saw earlier that the second chapter provides teaching on when the Rapture will occur. It specifically says that the Desolating Sacrilege must occur first. The third chapter deals with the practical problem of those who have become disorderly, thinking that there is no longer a reason to work because the Lord's return is imminent. The solution is to stop feeding them and let God's natural laws take their course. When they become hungry, they will go back to work.

Will Christians experience God's wrath?

One mid-tribulation rapture position, the Pre-Wrath position, is based on the following verse in Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians:

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

This is then put together with the first place the word wrath is found in Revelation:

16 And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

17 For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand (Rev 6:16,17)?

Voila, we have the rapture. The first weakness of this argument is that it doesn't deal with the scriptures that tell us when the rapture will occur. The second is that it doesn't take into account the context in which the word wrath is used in 1 Thes. 5:9. As we noted when we studied this passage above, wrath here is set in opposition to salvation. We therefore should understand it to mean the wrath of God that will consign unsaved mankind to eternal damnation, not to the temporal discomforts of God's wrath that will be poured out on the earth during the tribulation.

Will Christians experience God's wrath? No! But we certainly may experience persecution, wrath, and even martyrdom from the enemies of our souls.

8 All these are the beginning of sorrows.

9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved (Matt. 24:8-13).

7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

12 Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time (Rev. 12:7-12).

Many portions of scripture could be quoted here to show that God is able to protect us in times of trouble. I will quote only one:

7 A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee (Psalm 91:7).

However we must remember that while our view is primarily temporal, God is primarily concerned with our status for eternity.

10 Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom:

11 And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.

12 But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake.

13 And it shall turn to you for a testimony.

14 Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer:

15 For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.

16 And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death.

17 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.

18 But there shall not an hair of your head perish.

19 In your patience possess ye your souls (Luke 21:10-19).

From our temporal view, I'm sure we would say that if we are killed a lot more than a hair of our head has perished. However from God's eternal view, because of the resurrection, He knows that

even if we are martyred for Him not a single hair of our heads will be lost from eternity. It is true that God's elect are not destined for the wrath of eternal damnation, but we have been saved from the consequences of sin and are destined for eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

Summary of the three traditional views on the rapture

How then do I see the three traditional views of the rapture? Those who hold the Post-Tribulation view got closest to the right time for the Rapture. However, their view of the Rapture and Christ's physical return to the earth occurring on the same day does not take into account all that the Scriptures have to say about this subject. Those who hold to Mid-Tribulation views have rightly understood that God's elect will not experience His wrath, but they missed the fact that God is more concerned with our eternal salvation than He is with our temporal protection. Those who propose a Pre-Tribulation Rapture seem to have done the best job in laying out the events of the end times and they rightly note that there are several events included in Christ's Second Coming. This includes the fact that the rapture and Christ's physical return to earth for the battle of Armageddon are separated by some period of time. They however do not correctly interpret the scriptures that tell us when the rapture will occur and erroneously place the Rapture prior to the Tribulation. As we've seen in the first section of this article, we don't know the day or the hour when the Rapture will occur, but it will be closer to seven days before Christ's physical return to earth than seven years.

The correct understanding of the Rapture occurring while the armies gather for the Battle of Armageddon solves most of the problems that are pointed out by each of the traditional positions with relation to the other two. It solves the problem of the lack of biblical support and the contrivances that are necessary for the pre-tribulation view. It deals with the scriptures that say when the rapture will occur unlike the mid-tribulation positions. Lastly, it does away with the problem of the U-turn rapture (meeting the Lord in the air as He is descending and immediately returning with Him to the earth) and the supposed ability to calculate the day of the Rapture once the Tribulation begins. These are associated with the post-tribulation view of when the Rapture will occur.

Epilog

How do you judge our case? Did we pass the cross-examination? We noted at the start of this article that we must develop our doctrines from the Bible and not interpret the Bible based on our doctrines or we would be prone to error. The Word of God is immutable, unchanging. Our interpretations and doctrines on the other hand should remain pliable. We need to be able to mold them continually, as our understanding of the Bible increases and then our view of God's revelation will get clearer and clearer as we learn. Maybe on our next case, my brothers and sisters in Christ, I'll get the benefit of your investigation into this amazing gift our God has given us, the Bible.