



TEEN TREE OF LIFE

The Rapture of the Church

Part 2
November 15, 2020

Before you begin, ask yourself a very important question: Do you believe that Jesus Christ died on The Cross for all of your sins? If you answered yes, you will need to be sure that you are filled with The Holy Spirit. How do you do this? You name your sins to God The Father in His Son's Name. This is called Rebound. As a Christian, you must rebound any time you sin. This is taught in 1 JOH 1:9: *If we confess [name] our sins [directly to God], He [God] is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Now, if you have never believed that Jesus Christ died on The Cross for all of your sins, all you have to do is say to yourself that you believe in Him and you are saved! The Bible verse which teaches us this is ACTS 16:31: *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved."*

We're studying The Rapture of the church which we have already learned will take place before period of time called The Tribulation. The Tribulation will take place before The Lord Jesus Christ establishes His Kingdom on earth. At The Rapture, all believers, both living and dead, will be caught up to meet Him in the air – to be with Him forever. The timing of when The Rapture will take place is a secret to everyone but God The Father.

The Rapture of the church is different from the Second Coming. The Rapture takes place before The Tribulation, while the Second Coming takes place at the end of The Tribulation. The Tribulation is launched by The Rapture which is why it's important to learn and understand what takes place during this "great day of His wrath" and that it will affect Israel and all nations.

In view of this, let's look more closely at The Tribulation. It's called **"the hour of testing"** by Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in **REV 3:10: "Because you have kept My [instruction] word of perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of the [temptation] testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole [inhabited earth] world, to [tempt] test those who live on the earth."** This seven-year period of intense earthly distress is the subject of much of **The Book of Revelation**. Our Savior's Words make it clear that the church will not go through The Tribulation. Knowing that should comfort you and help keep you focused on your Christian Walk.

Now we'll look at **REV 3:10** (above) more closely. In the original text, the Greek word **"from"** is the word **"ek."** When translated to English, **"ek"** means "out of." The use of

the word “**ek**” by the apostle John teaches us that unlike other forms of hardship, where God promises to be with us, the church will be kept “out of” the tribulation. If the church were destined to be kept through the tribulation, John would have used the Greek word “**dia**” which means “through.” Doesn’t this bring you even more comfort? And don’t you see how important it is to look at the original text of The Bible?

Our Lord also said in **REV 3:10** that the “**testing**” [temptation] unleashed in The Tribulation will “**come upon the whole world**” [inhabited earth]. He says this is because He will take all Christians out of the world at The Rapture, before The Tribulation starts, and those left inhabiting the earth will be the ones who have to face this period of intense earthly distress. When The Rapture has taken place and The Tribulation occurs, the church – The Body of Christ – is spared from the chaos and horror because at The Rapture the church will be resurrected. The Rapture is God’s way of ending the Church-Age and delivering His Royal Family from the wrath to come.

The book of Isaiah teaches us what will happen during The Tribulation: ***The earth trembles like a heavy drinker And sways like a hut, For its wrongdoing is heavy upon it, And it will fall, never to rise again. So it will happen on that day, That the Lord will punish the rebellious angels of heaven on high, And the kings of the earth on earth. (ISA 24:20-21)***. It’s going to be an extremely difficult time to be alive. And remember – it could take place on this earth tomorrow! Knowing what is going to happen during The Tribulation is useful to believers, like us, because The Second Coming cannot take place until all of these hardships have occurred.

The apostle Paul wrote two letters to the church at Thessalonica and in the first one, every chapter ends with a reference to The Second Coming of The Lord Jesus Christ. **1TH 1:9-10 (New International Reader’s Version)** tells us: ***The believers themselves report the kind of welcome you gave us. They tell about how you turned away from statues of gods. And you turned to serve the living and true God. They tell about how you are waiting for his Son to come from heaven. God raised him from the dead. He is Jesus. He saves us from God’s anger, and his anger is sure to come.*** When you read this, do you think about how even way back then at the beginning of Christianity, believers were looking toward The Rapture?

TIT 2:11-13 puts The Rapture or the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ like this: ***For the grace of God has appeared, [to all mankind] bringing salvation to all people, [disciplining] instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously, and in a godly manner in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus...*** When you look at the original language in these verses, “**blessed hope**” is “makarios elpis” – which translates as happy guarantee! So, you are happily guaranteed that The Rapture is coming. It may or may not occur in your lifetime, but you still know it’s coming. So, knowing it, what do you do? You prepare. You apply doctrine. You are occupied with The Person of Jesus Christ. You utilize God’s Happiness. You operate in virtue-love.

All believers can have confidence and hope and can benefit from a guarantee regarding The Rapture. It’s a happy guarantee. It’s a doctrine which produces

confidence. The confidence comes from knowing that we have been delivered from the wrath to come.

The Rapture of the church is totally beyond our control because The Resurrection is the Lord's Victory. Look at what the apostle Paul wrote in **1CO 15:51-57 (New International Reader's Version)**: ***Listen! I am telling you a mystery. We will not all die. But we will all be changed. That will happen in a flash, as quickly as you can wink an eye. It will happen at the blast of the last trumpet. Then the dead will be raised to live forever. And we will be changed. Our natural bodies don't last forever. They must be dressed with what does last forever. What dies must be dressed with what does not die. In fact, that is going to happen. What does not last will be dressed with what lasts forever. What dies will be dressed with what does not die. Then what is written will come true. It says, "Death has been swallowed up. It has lost the battle." (Isaiah 25:8) "Death, where is the victory you thought you had? Death, where is your sting?" (Hosea 13:14) The sting of death is sin. And the power of sin is the law. But let us give thanks to God! He gives us the victory because of what our Lord Jesus Christ has done.***

So, the church-age ends with the transferring of the church into the Lord's Presence. Isn't that exciting? And remember, this is a promise from Our Lord and Savior who cannot tell a lie! The promise of The Rapture is found in **JOH 14:1-3 (New International Reader's Version)**: ***"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God. Believe in me also. There are many rooms in my Father's house. If this were not true, would I have told you that I am going there? Would I have told you that I would prepare a place for you there? If I go and do that, I will come back. And I will take you to be with me. Then you will also be where I am."***

{to be continued}