

The Rapture - An End and a Beginning

As I always admonish, do not just believe me, but be like the Bereans in Acts -- read the scriptures carefully, pray for the Holy Spirit to open your understanding of God's word and come to your conclusion on this or any subject. A number of points raised as questions will hopefully create an incentive for you for further study on your own.

Limited understanding of Time

In debating the nature and timing of the "Rapture" much heat and very little light is being generated by this controversy. This controversy arises primarily because we humans really have an extremely limited view of God, the Lord of Time and Space. Our limited understanding of time is a root cause of our misunderstanding of much of the scripture, especially prophecy.

• *Time -- a physical property*

Science has shown that time, space, matter and energy all interact in complex, still only partially understood ways. Einstein and others discovered that time is a physical property of the universe that came into being simultaneously with space, matter and energy. The properties of time-space are in turn affected by what the space contains. Time is affected by acceleration and motion.

• *God "sees" all time all together*

We view time as a linear progression of events, from what we call past to the present and future. We are like a person standing at a street corner watching (for example) the Rose Parade in Pasadena CA. We can't see and don't know what is to come around the corner (future) until it gets in front of us (present) and when the float or marching band or whatever has passed, we only have a memory or perhaps a photograph (past). God however is like someone in the overhead blimp or aircraft, he sees the whole parade all together, even before the various units join the parade route. He sees all time from eternity to eternity because He is the great "I AM".

This event which theologians have called "Rapture" causes much argument as to its timing and nature largely because of our linear time thinking.

• *We shall be like Him*

John tells us in 1John 3:2

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

Now how and when will these "sons of God" be like Jesus and when shall we see Him as He is?

Answer: "When He shall appear"

Now "when" is a time word, which we ignorantly assume to be only a specific linear time event according to our exceedingly limited view of time.

• *Believers are multi-dimensional*

Even at the "moment in time" you are reading this, you, if you are a believer in Jesus, are living in at least two time dimensions. In our physical, presently mortal bodies we live in the earthly linear time dimension as measured by clocks and calendars, but God, who is eternal sees us in the Spirit right now in eternity with Him. He says "raised us up" -- (past tense) -- and seated us (Present tense) where?

Ephesians 2:6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,

In this present we wait (future tense) for Jesus to re-enter our space-time dimension and be the supreme Governor of this Earth. Then at last the prayer -- thy will be done on earth -- will be fully answered. The scripture often speaks of us being here only temporarily and Paul speaks of his mortal body as a tent -- we're all just camping out here on earth.

Philippians 3:20 But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ,

So this event called "The Rapture" happens for every believer after death when that person steps out of this limited linear time-space into the

glorious dimensions beyond time as we now know it. For us here on earth, still in the time domain, the rapture is an event yet in the future.

• *It's all a matter of code*

All matter in this physical universe is made up of identical particles which in turn make atoms, which then are combined in near infinite ways to make all physical things, including our earthly bodies. All the individual atoms in my body are identical to everybody else's. What makes the difference is how these atoms are arranged. What determines the arrangement of these atoms in the case of living things? It is the code of life (DNA) which God created before the worlds were made and keeps. Now code or information is not subject to the same laws of physics (that includes time) as are matter and energy. The carrier of the code (our bodies and their DNA molecules) is subject to entropy (decay) and will die, but the code itself is immaterial and immortal, kept by God unto that last day.

• *Software debugging*

The problem is, that when sin entered, this code was corrupted and required Jesus' death on the cross in order for a righteous God to be able to re-write the code and remove the death bug. This re-writing process has a definite beginning called the new birth, but then begins a lifelong, ongoing process, where we are given the free opportunity to help or hinder the debugging process. Paul clearly tells us this:

Romans 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.

The goal of all this is defined as having the same thought patterns and attitude as Jesus has. With your cooperation, your mind, the software, your thinking and attitudes, all need to be upgraded by the Lord throughout this life. Your brain with your body attached, is the present hardware, where this can happen.

1 Corinthians 2:16 "For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct

him?" But we have the [mind of Christ].

The process will be complete when the code is loaded into brand new hardware (the new body) at the resurrection and/or rapture.

• *Computers as an analogy*

We do the same sort of things in very limited ways with computer codes. If anyone takes say a floppy disk or other code storage device, and erases it totally, and then weighs it on the most accurate scale imaginable and then weighs it again after recording a massive amount of information thereon, there will be no difference. The code on the disc is not subject to gravity because it is not a physical thing.

• *Physical examination cannot reveal function*

Even the most intimate knowledge of the circuits of a computer will reveal absolutely nothing of its function unless the computer has a program (the code) and electricity as well as some means of communicating the activity of the code to our senses (display). Its function is solely determined by the codes therein, not its physical configuration. So it is with us - no amount of anatomical studies will ever reveal the personality and spirit(code) and without the life power (electricity), there is no life, even if all the DNA parts of the code are still there. The major difference, other than complexity, between humans and a computer is the fact that computers are deterministic. A computer will always operate exactly as it has been programmed to do, every single time without exception. Humans and to some degree, many other living creatures also have freedom to deviate from the programming. This ability is what enables us to truly love.

• *God alone has all the source code*

God is the originator and keeper of all knowledge and information, and the source of all power.

Colossians 2:3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

We don't have this knowledge, and even if we did, we wouldn't understand it nor have the wisdom to apply it correctly.

Romans 11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!

He keeps the detailed codes needed to rebuild a complete person, spirit, mind and body. In the resurrection of the righteous, God will use these upgraded and perfected codes to create new and marvelous bodies. Jesus indicates that God keeps exceedingly detailed records.

Luke 12:7 Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

Notice it says "numbered" not merely counted. It means that each hair is individually identified! The codes that God keeps for every human are far more detailed than anything a scientist can imagine. The divine keeper of information records everything we say and all deep dark secrets that people try to hide will be made public.

Matthew 12:36 But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken.

Luke 12:3 What you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight, and what you have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed from the roofs.

Because He knows the codes and how to apply them perfectly, He was able to do "miracles" of healing, controlling the raging elements, multiplying bread and fish, turning water into wine and raising the dead. The God who possesses all knowledge and power he used to make everything in the first place, can at any time, easily arrange the basic atomic particles to suit His purposes.

• *An eternal heavenly upgrade*

There will indeed come a point in this present time-space dimension where a certain group of people will get their upgraded eternal bodies without the death of the old one.

1 Corinthians 15:51 Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed

1 Corinthians 15:52 in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

• *God's pattern*

Jesus is the pattern. In a quantum of time (~10⁻⁴³sec) the smallest piece of time that scientists tell us can exist, -- twinkling of an eye -- the resurrection energy from God re-coded the atoms of His body such that he now could physically be both in this time-space dimension and other higher dimensions simultaneously. That is why he could (to us) seemingly go through closed doors, appear and disappear right in front of people and other things which we deem "miraculous". He just slipped in and out of our time-space locality as easily as we go from the living room into the kitchen of our house.

• *No one knows "when"*

The "when" of time, such as a date, is specifically hidden. Jesus was very definite about that:

Matthew 24:36 "No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

Acts 1:7 He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.

Notice that he specifically says that we cannot know the day or the hour, but he told us specific signs to tell us that the season of his coming is drawing near.

• *Surprise, surprise*

The important thing is to be ready always, for it will come when it is least expected, even by the most devout believers. Jesus illustrates this in:

Matthew 25:5 The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep.

Notice the little word "ALL". They were all virgins (pure) yet surprised when the event finally came. They like the disciples in Gethsemane were asleep and had a sudden awakening. However, fully half of them were not

ready. They were off buying oil when the bridegroom came and they stayed behind. When they finally show up, he tells them that he doesn't know them. They were never one of his children.

Patterns and Models

In order for God to get truth across to us he constantly uses what I prefer to call models, theologians call them types or shadows. When an architect or engineer wants to communicate the design of a building or machine to others, he will often build a model. God does this extensively. Examples are: the system of sacrifices, the Jewish tabernacle and temple, the lives of many of the Bible characters and so forth.

• *The pattern of Enoch*

In Genesis 5 we have a genealogy from Adam to Noah. In each instance, except for Enoch, there is the sad refrain "and he died". Enoch was the father of Methuselah, the man who lived longer than any other. Of Enoch scripture says:

Genesis 5:23 Altogether, Enoch lived 365 years.

Genesis 5:24 Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.

Enoch walked with God and was taken away by God before the time of the great judgment of the flood. Noah also walked with God and was called righteous and did see the time of the flood and was preserved through the flood.

Genesis 6:9 This is the account of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked with God.

Is Enoch a model of the church spared the time of trial?

Revelation 3:10 Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth.

and Noah and his family a model of Israel being preserved through the trial?

• *The pattern of Lot*

The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah could not take place until Lot and his family were safely out of there. Lot's wife showed by her disobedience to the command not to look back that even though physically she was on her way out of town, her heart was left in Sodom and the judgment overtook her. In keeping with this model, the final wrath of God against all evildoers on Earth will not come until the righteous ones are first taken away.

• *Where was Daniel?*

In chapter 3 of Daniel we read the story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (their Babylonian names) and their rescue out of the fiery furnace. In studying the Bible, it is often instructive to determine what is not said. Daniel is one of only two people in all of scripture who are called beloved, the other being the apostle John. Both were shown the time of the end, Daniel from an earthly viewpoint and John from a heavenly perspective.

Daniel 9:23 At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.

In all of chapter 3 there is no mention of Daniel. Where was he when his friends were thrown to the fiery trial? We are not told where he was at this time, but he was certainly not where Nebuchadnezzar could get a hold of him immediately, or he would have been subject to the same decree which he could not, as a God fearing Jew, obey and thus would have been subject to the same trial by fire. Is Daniel the beloved, being spared from the time of trial by being elsewhere a model for the beloved bride of Christ, the church, and the three Hebrews a model for Israel, being delivered through the trial? Daniel shows up again later in the book of course, but he was not around during that particular judgment time. He served a brilliant career in the two largest empires to exist on earth in his day. Similarly, scripture seems to indicate that the church will not be around for that particular time of judgment called "the day of the

Lord" but later returns triumphantly with the Lord.

• *Escape*

In response to the questions of His disciples Jesus speaks of an unprecedented time of tribulation to come upon this planet.

Luke 21:35 For it will come upon all those who live on the face of the whole earth.

Luke 21:36 Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man."

As part of that discourse he speaks of escape in a relation to time and ties their location of escape to standing "before the Son of Man".

• *The "how" of the rapture*

There is a widely held assumption that when this event occurs, the living disciples of Jesus will suddenly disappear, as is expressed by the bumper sticker: "In case of Rapture this vehicle will be unmanned". The scripture does not support that assumption. Again, God gives us a model, in this case, Jesus Christ himself. Paul details the process:

1 Corinthians 15:51 Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed--

1 Corinthians 15:52 in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

• *The word --> changed*

236 allasso {al-las'-so}

1) to change, to exchange one thing for another, to transform

• *The word --> twinkling*

4493 rhipe {hree-pay'}

1) a throw, stroke, beat

2) a moment of time

First notice that it is a transformation from a perishable to an imperishable body and that it

occurs "in the twinkling of an eye". This was about the shortest time span Paul's readers could imagine. Modern science has learned that time itself, just like matter and energy cannot be arbitrarily divided into smaller and smaller pieces. Scientists have discovered that there is a quantum of time ($\sim 10^{-43}$ sec), though exceeding small, that cannot be made any smaller. Just because a person is transformed from a mortal to an immortal being doesn't mean they will disappear or no longer know how to or care about driving a car or flying an airplane.

• *The first resurrection*

This event is also called the first resurrection, and in the light of that it is important to look at the resurrection of Jesus as a model.

Revelation 20:6 Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

• *40 Days on earth*

After Jesus was resurrected He remained here on this earth for a period of 40 days and after that he ascended to heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.

Acts 1:3 After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.

Mark 16:19 After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God.

Jesus is the pattern, and those that have been transformed at that time, yet future to us, shall be like Him.

1 John 3:2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

They will not simply disappear the instant after transformation, leaving crashed cars, airplanes and other chaos behind, for God is not the

creator of chaos. Jesus in his resurrected, immortal state interacted with His beloved, yet still mortal followers and admonished and instructed them. According to this model, it is quite reasonable to expect that those who have been transformed will also be here on earth for a short period of time, perhaps also 40 days. They too will minister in the name of Jesus and have to tell those who were not transformed that they cannot help them.

The parable of the virgins shows that those who were ready were later allowed to go into the feast when the bridegroom showed up, still interacted with the foolish ones but were not able to help them. It is interesting that the foolish ones had some time to try to get oil but when they finally did come, were refused. Jesus tells them that he doesn't know them. They were never one of his children.

After a short time the immortal ones, being free of the shackles of our space-time, will ascend into the sky, likely high above Jerusalem just as Jesus did

Acts 1:10 They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them.

Acts 1:11 "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

There they will meet Jesus who will then personally escort His beloved bride to the Father's house for the greatest celebration God's entire creation has ever experienced -- the wedding of the bride to her bridegroom, the Son of God most high.

• *Satan's orgy*

Meanwhile, on earth, Satan, the old dragon will conduct an orgy of unprecedented suffering and terror with a humanity that has rejected Jesus, their only salvation. Jesus tells us that if that time were not cut short, there would be no survivors.

Matthew 24:22 If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the

sake of the elect those days will be shortened.

The modern military technologies make such a scenario possible and the Bible predicts it.

Different Groups of Believers

Another reason there is much confusion in prophecy in general and the rapture in particular is the failure to differentiate between groups of believers. An example of this is a seeming contradiction.

Matt 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

In Matthew we read "...the gates of hell shall NOT prevail..." and in Revelation we read

Rev 13:7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

"...and to overcome them..." So which is it -- does hell prevail - or not? If these passages applied to the same people, then there would seem to be a contradiction here, but in Matthew Jesus was specifically talking about the church and in Revelation it is a group of saints other than the church, namely the believing Jews and other believers on Earth at that time.

• *What will take place hereafter*

A careful study of the first three chapters of Revelation, especially paying attention to the three part divine outline of the whole book given in

Revelation 1:19 "Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later.

will show the distinct transition to the third "what will take place later". Notice that there is no eighth letter to the churches. The church on earth is no longer mentioned in the book of Revelation. After chapter 3, the book takes on a very Jewish flavor and the church is conspicuously absent. Of the last two churches, Philadelphia and Laodicea, one will be raptured and one will go into the great tribulation.

• *Kept from the hour of tribulation*

Speaking of the Philadelphia church:

Revelation 3:10 Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth.

This church is to be kept from the time of tribulation, from the period of, not only the actual tribulation. He is not speaking about tribulation and suffering in general, but of a very specific time "the hour" in history.

• *No wrath for the church*

Notice also who this trial (judgment) is for: "... those that live on the earth". It is the time of wrath and yet scripture says:

1 Thessalonians 5:9 For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The church now suffers the wrath of Satan, but never the wrath of God.

Revelation 12:12 Therefore rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short."

• *Safely hidden*

In the old testament there is an intriguing passage concerning the safekeeping of "my people" from the wrath to come upon "the people of the earth":

Isaiah 26:20 Go, my people, enter your rooms and shut the doors behind you; hide yourselves for a little while until his wrath has passed by.

Isaiah 26:21 See, the LORD is coming out of his dwelling to punish the people of the earth for their sins. The earth will disclose the blood shed upon her; she will conceal her slain no longer.

Are these the church saints who will be hidden behind shut doors for a little while until His wrath passes by? I believe this to be the case. If

not, then who are these and where are these "rooms" they are to be hidden in until God has punished the people of the earth? Notice also the "your rooms" denoting a place for those designated "my people". Jesus speaks of this:

John 14:2 In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you.

Notice He speaks of rooms (a specific location) and tells who that place is for. Isaiah also speaks of a shut door and so does Jesus.

Matthew 25:10 "But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut.

• *Tribulation for Israel*

In Matthew 24 Jesus is talking to Jews about what will happen to Jews in Judea at that time -- the time theologians call the great tribulation:

Matthew 24:16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

He is not talking to the gentiles or the church here but to those living in Judea. This is further underscored by:

Matthew 24:20 Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath.

Gentiles do not worry about the Sabbath, but most go to church on Sunday and do not pay any attention to rules about how far they are allowed to travel on any day, including the Sabbath. This also shows very strongly that this passage is addressed to Jewish believers in Judea and has absolutely no bearing on the gentile church. Those in Israel at that time who believe in Yeshua, they will heed this admonition and get out of there fast when the abomination Daniel speaks of takes place in the temple.

• *History repeats*

This is preservation from judgment of believing Jews already happened once before in history. In 70 A.D. the Romans came and laid siege to Jerusalem. No one could enter or exit the city. After the siege was in effect for a few months,

word came from Rome that the besieging army was needed to help put down a possible revolt against Caesar, a palace coup so to speak. Without warning, the Romans called off the siege and marched off to their ships anchored at the coast. The Christians who believed what Jesus had said earlier, took the opportunity to get out of Jerusalem ASAP. When the Romans got to the seashore, another message arrived from Rome, that everything was under control there and their help was not needed. The Romans immediately marched back to Jerusalem and resumed the siege, which eventually ended in the capture and destruction of the city and its Temple. There was not a single believer in Yeshua left in town, only Jews and others which had refused to believe Jesus and the message of his followers..

• *The biggest harvest yet to come*

After the church is gone, there will be a large ingathering of believers from all nations, but especially from Israel. The Holy Spirit will work with and through Israel to minister to millions world wide and the hate of the godless towards believers in Yeshua in and outside of Israel will reach unprecedented proportions. Today, especially in our nation and Europe it is mostly true that there is not much apparent difference between Christians and unbelievers. During that time however, there will be a very sharp division between believers and those who reject the Gospel. We read of believers alive during that time:

Malachi 3:17 "They will be mine," says the LORD Almighty, "in the day when I make up my treasured possession. I will spare them, just as in compassion a man spares his son who serves him.

Malachi 3:18 And you will again see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not.

That same period of time of wrath toward the sinners is also the time that God gathers up His treasure out of the fields of the Earth. The context of the above verses is set in end times when God will again bless Israel.

• *Cry for revenge*

The believers killed by the coming world government and they will cry for revenge against the earth dwellers:

Revelation 6:9 When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained.

Revelation 6:10 They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?"

This cry for vengeance stands in sharp contrast to "forgive your enemies" because now the time of grace is over and the time of the fearful wrath of God upon the unrepentant sinners of the earth has arrived. Notice these saints are not scolded for their cry for revenge, but told to be patient.

Revelation 6:11 Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed as they had been was completed.

• *Israel -- Gods ambassadors*

Israel has always been called from the beginning to be God's messengers and representatives on Earth. Israel will come under extreme pressure from the Godless antichrist, but God will raise up some extraordinary men (144000 of them) from among them (12000 from each tribe) as well as two other super prophets to reap a huge, unprecedented harvest of souls from this planet.

• *Believing Messianic Jews*

Those in Israel, who are believers in Yeshua and are living in Israel, will flee to Edom (today's Jordan) as the armies of the world assemble in the valley of Armageddon for the final assault on Jerusalem.

• *Head for the hills*

Because they believe Yeshua, they will have heeded His admonition to get out of there in a big hurry and head for the hills.

Matthew 24:15 "So when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel--let the reader understand--

Matthew 24:16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

Matthew 24:17 Let no one on the roof of his house go down to take anything out of the house.

Matthew 24:18 Let no one in the field go back to get his cloak.

• A desperate cry

There these believers will find shelter and desperately cry for the Lord Jesus to save them from sure destruction. The Lord will hear this cry after the powerful military machine of Israel is utterly defeated by the armies of earth. Yeshua, and He alone, will fight for and with His people, just as we read in the days of old. He tells us about this:

Isaiah 63:1 Who is this coming from Edom, from Bozrah, with his garments stained crimson? Who is this, robed in splendor, striding forward in the greatness of his strength? "It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save."

Isaiah 63:2 Why are your garments red, like those of one treading the winepress?

Isaiah 63:3 "I have trodden the winepress alone; from the nations no one was with me. I trampled them in my anger and trod them down in my wrath; their blood spattered my garments, and I stained all my clothing.

Isaiah 63:4 For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my redemption has come.

Isaiah 63:5 I looked, but there was no one to help, I was appalled that no one gave support; so my own arm worked salvation for me, and my own wrath sustained me.

Isaiah 63:6 I trampled the nations in my anger; in my wrath I made them drunk and poured their blood on the ground."

Isaiah sees the scene from an earthly perspective and John from a heavenly view. In both instances, Jesus' robe is soaked with the blood of His enemies as he destroys them in the final battle and leads His faithful followers triumphantly to Jerusalem. Notice the juxtaposition (v4) of "day of vengeance" and "year of my redemption". Vengeance towards the enemies of God and redemption for the remnant of Israel who believed and obeyed Yeshua's admonition (Matt24:16) to flee to safety in the nick of time. Notice also that vengeance is associated with a day, a short period of time while redemption is associated with year, a much longer time. God likes redemption much better than wrath and spends much more time doing that.

• Heavenly hosts enter our time domain

Revelation 19:11 I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war.

Revelation 19:12 His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself.

Revelation 19:13 He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God.

Revelation 19:14 The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean.

Revelation 19:15 Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty.

Revelation 19:16 On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

In Rev 19:14 it mentions the armies of heaven (heavenly hosts) dressed in white following Him.

Among these I believe are all those who had a deep, heartfelt yearning and love for God and are made righteous by faith - like Abraham - and therefore have partaken of the first resurrection (of which the "Rapture" is but a minor part) and will now along with Christ re-enter this time-space dimension and be on earth in their immortal bodies participating in the Lord's righteous but stern rule over all surviving mortals who are still subject to the now significantly reduced, but still existing limitations imposed by the fall of man.

Conclusion

• Faithful servants

Jesus said that the proper way to wait for Him is to be a faithful servant, doing what the master of the house has ordered to be done.

Matthew 24:45 "Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time?"

Matthew 24:46 It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns.

Matthew 24:47 I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions.

Matthew 24:48 But suppose that servant is wicked and says to himself, 'My master is staying away a long time,'

Matthew 24:49 and he then begins to beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with drunkards.

Matthew 24:50 The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of.

Matthew 24:51 He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

• Let's help in the harvest

God has given discernible patterns to teach us of His ways and searching them out is a challenge. Understanding these patterns is not central to

being pleasing to God, rather it is the doing of His will.

For true followers of Jesus it is pointless, even sinful to squabble and cause divisions over when the "Rapture" will take place according to the eternal plan of God. Dark times will be coming, but throughout history, God's love and power was always most evident in the darkest times. The darker the time, the brighter we all can shine for our Lord, helping in the harvest by living a life that those around us will also want to have. Even though we are looked at by God as Kings and Priests, most of the time here on earth we may feel more like beggars telling fellow beggars where we have found bread and hope.

Here is how the Apostle Peter expresses what we ought to be doing:

1 Peter 3:15 But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,

• Readiness in purity

Some may see the idea of a "Rapture" before the "Great Tribulation" as wishful thinking and escapism, but scripture sees it as a powerful incentive to be pure and holy.

1 John 3:2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

1 John 3:3 Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

Let us therefore encourage one another to be faithful and holy servants of the KING of KINGS and by the Spirit say "Come Lord Jesus, come quickly".