

Trinity Grace Fellowship

The Pauline Bootcamp

Session 8

The Hope of the Body of Christ II: The Rapture-Battle

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1. ABSTRACT

This module (Session 8) of the TGF Pauline Bootcamp is the second under the theme of Pauline Eschatology and is dedicated to the doctrine of the Rapture. The Rapture is that event whereby Christ takes His Church (His Body) to Himself. At the Rapture, the Body of Christ (Christ's extended non-incarnate humanity), fights its way through the demonic realm, taking its rightful position with Christ upon the Father's Throne, and ruling the entire created order. It is the hope of the Body of Christ, which provides "comfort" to the Body-saint's soul.

2. THE BIBLICAL STATEMENT OF THE RAPTURE

While there are implicit references to the Rapture in the pages of Pauline Scripture, only 2 of the direct references are discussed in this section.

Because 1&2 Thessalonians are essentially the first set of books written in the Pauline Corpus, we will begin by discussing the Rapture references contained therein. After which, we shall add data to this glorious doctrine with reference from 1 Cor 15. What immediately follows is not intended as a detailed exegesis, but rather an introduction and summary of the passages discussed.

2.1. An Exegetical Overview of 1 Thes 4:13-18

1 Thes 4:13 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.

(A) Verse 13

(1) Paul as the Apostle to the Body of Christ, explicitly states that his wish for the Thessalonians is "not to be ignorant of those saints who have died (before the Rapture)". Paul uses the strong Greek negation (ου) when exhorting these saints "not to be ignorant". The usage of the strong negation in "not being ignorant" tells the reader the importance of this great issue. The importance being that saints are ordained to a life with Christ as His extended non-incarnate humanity ruling the entire created order, and the event which starts the Body's eternal hope is discussed in vs. 15 (the Rapture). In contrast, those who have no hope are those who die without Christ, people heading for a Christ-less eternity, eternally suffering for their sins in the Godly-Flame (Rev 20:10, 14) forever. Those of the latter group are reprobate.

(B) Verse 14

(2) Because the Thessalonians are regenerated saints (as evidenced in their belief in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ), as well as those saints who have died before the Rapture, Christ will bring the dead saints with Him at the Rapture.

(C) Verse 15

(3) The saints living at the time of the Rapture will not "prevent" or better translated in modern English as "precede" those saints who have died before the Rapture. In other words, Christ brings the "dead in Christ" with Him.

(4) The Rapture is called here the "παρουσια of the Lord". In context, and as explicitly stated this is the "παρουσια of the Body of Christ" and should not be confused with the "παρουσια of the earthly Kingdom Saints".

(D) Verse 16

(4) Here we see a partial, yet explicit description of the Rapture of the Body of Christ.

(5) Christ descends from heaven Himself. Here we see the beautiful picture of Christ as Head, coming of Himself for His Own extended Humanity (Body). He descends on His command as the exalted man.

(6) The phrase "shall descend" is used nowhere else of Christ's coming, showing the distinction between the Rapture of the Church and the "coming of Christ" to setup Israel's kingdom.¹

(7) "With a shout" is from the Greek word *κελευειν* meaning "to summon". Christ's command is the one which summons His Body to Himself.

(8) By Christ's command, the Archangel shouts and sounds the trumpet. This is a wonderful reminder that the elect Angels long for the Body of Christ to take its rightful place on the Father's Throne [comp. Eph 1:19-22; 2:6; Rev 3:20]. The Rapture is that event, which formally places the Body of Christ in authority of the created order and angelic authorities. The elect Angels long for this, for it is God's proper line of authority and the Angels can only get on with their own hope when the Body sits upon the Father's throne, ruling the entire created order with Christ.

Rom 8:19 For the earnest expectation of the creature (creation) waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

(9) Dead Body-saints receive their glorified bodies FIRST. The word used here of the dead saints "rising" is actually "ἀναστῆσουντα" from *ανα* (meaning, "again" or "above") and *ἵστημι* (meaning, "to stand"), hence the compound form means "to stand again" or "to stand up". This better fits with the notion of appropriating one's glorified body from the dirt of the earth, rather than resurrecting.

(E) Verse 17

(10) Second in the Rapture sequence is the "living saints" appropriating their glorified bodies.

(11) Third in the Rapture sequence is the "catching up" together (i.e., dead and living saints) in a simultaneous fashion and being gathered into the clouds. The Greek word for clouds is (*νεφέλη*) and is a direct reference to the "angelic clouds" not to meteorological clouds. This is similar to the case of the Angelic Shekinah, which led Israel throughout the Wilderness as a pillar of fire by night and a "cloud" or tornado by day. When the dead and living saints are "caught up" together, this will be the first time that the Body of Christ acts as a "completed whole", as "a perfectly functioning system" in complete harmony. All Body saints throughout the so-called "church age" will work together in appropriating our hope (e.g., Paul, Timothy, Titus, Martin Luther, John Calvin, etc.).

(12) An important note to be made here, one which Paul explicitly makes. The Body of Christ remains in heaven forever, and never comes back to planet earth. Where Israel and the Righteous Gentile Nations have an Earthly Hope, the Body of Christ has a Heavenly Hope.

(F) Verse 18

(13) The comfort talked about here is a "psychological" comfort (e.g., "a comfort of the soul"), providing comfort for the living saints because (1) knowledge that the dead saints will participate in the Rapture, and (2) knowledge that the living saints will participate in the Rapture and enter their hope - what a Figure of Understatement! To know that one's eternal hope, purchased by the blood of Christ, is safe and secure provides an eternal comfort to the soul of the believer. As Paul wonderfully states:

Rom 8:31 What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?

32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth.

34 Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

¹ We have seen in other TGF outlines that the "Coming of Christ" to setup Israel's Kingdom is all performed by Christ and His Body, through the angelic ministry as they guide and command Israel (144K, Gentiles bringing back the Jews in Diaspora, Resurrection of the dead Jewish saints [Abraham, David, Peter, John, etc.]). As a point of contrast note that Ez 37, describing Ezekiel's vision of the dead bones coming alive, is a description of the dead Jewish saints being resuscitating out of Hades (Luke 16) and entering into the Promised Land AFTER the 144K (living Jews) are already there. This is in direct contrast to the Body's Rapture, where the dead appropriate their glorified bodies BEFORE the living Body members are changed and receive their glorified bodies.

(14) The doctrine of the Rapture is a doctrine which provides comfort to the living saint. Why then, should we not be concerned with such a doctrine? Why should we ignore eschatology? Indeed, those who teach that the Rapture is an unimportant Doctrine are either liars or extremely uninformed. The Rapture specifically and Eschatology generally are part of the Saint's "psychological protection" against despair, sadness, and wow.

2.2. An Exegetical Overview of 1 Cor 15:51-58

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.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

55 O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory?

56 The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law.

57 But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

(A) Verse 51

(1) Paul gets our attention by using a Figure of Asterismos² seen in his usage of "Behold" (ἰδοῦ). This Figure is used to tell the reader to pay close attention to what is about to be discussed because it is of utmost importance. This correlates to 1 Thes 4:13, where Paul exhorts the Thessalonians "not to be ignorant" of the dead Body-saints specifically, and the doctrine of the Rapture generally.

(2) Paul is now about to tell (λεγω - "speak" or "articulate") the Corinthians about the Rapture and label it a "mystery" (μυστήριον). For further discussion on the mystery nature of the Rapture, see sub-section below.

(3) When the Body of Christ enters into its hope at the Rapture, the very nature of our bodies is changed. The Greek word used here for "change" is (αλλάσσω) and means "to change from one thing into another thing". The idea is from a sinful body unable to stand in the presence of God, to a glorified body specifically designed to sit upon the Father's Throne as Christ's righteous extended non-incarnate humanity. The Body of Christ is simultaneously resurrected and glorified, in contrast to Israel, who are resurrected before the Millennial Kingdom (Ez 37), but are not glorified until after the renovation of the heaven and earth (Rev 21), some 1000+ years after their resurrection.

(B) Verse 52

(4) When the Rapture happens, it happens quickly (more on this below).

(5) The Rapture happens at the last trump and as we saw in 1 Thes 4:16 it is the Archangel sounding the trumpet by order of Christ Himself.

(6) Again the order of Body saints appropriating glorified bodies is addressed. First the dead saints are glorified then the living saints. As we stated earlier in a footnote, this is in reverse order of Israel entering the Millennial Kingdom.

(C) Verse 53

(7) The nature of our eternal bodies is that of "incorruption". Our glorified bodies will never die, will always be perfectly healthy, and be like Christ's glorified human body. This glorification allows the Body of Christ to be in the presence of the Ancient of Days.

Rev 1:13 And in the midst of the seven candlesticks *one* like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

14 His head and *his* hairs *were* white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes *were* as a flame of fire;

15 And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.

(D) Verse 54

(8) Christ through the Holy Spirit empowers His Body for complete and utter victory.

² E.W. Bullinger, **Figures of Speech Used in the Bible**, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1982, p. 926

(E) Verse 55

(9) Neither death nor the grave has any strength over the Body of Christ. Through Christ Himself, the Body of Christ has been victorious over death and over the angelic realm (ᾠδης - Hades). Hades is referred to because it is the place that holds the fallen angels "who left their first estate" - that group of angels who was the source of the demonic infusion into the human race - the nephilim - whose sole purpose was to destroy the line of Messiah, the promised seed. They could not stop Christ's incarnation and they will be unable to stop Christ from redeeming and glorifying His Body-saints.

(10) This same idea is seen in 1 Cor 2:7, 8.

1 Cor 2:7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, *even* the hidden *wisdom*, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

8 **Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known *it*, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.**
(Emphasis that of the author's)

In other words, had the demonic realm known that the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ was to bring about a group of redeemed sinners to be placed in authority over them, they would not have crucified Christ.³

(F) Verse 56

(11) The goading of death is sin, that is, "what pushes one to death is sin" and what condemns one is the law (in context Pauline Law). So we are without hope if we have only the law without Christ.

(G) Verse 57

(12) Christ has fulfilled the law for the Body and is therefore our completion [Rom 10:4].

(H) Verse 58

(13) The Rapture and Hope of the Body of Christ are part of our driving force (psychologically speaking) to live properly in this life. Our lives on this planet are not in vain, because of what the Lord has in store for those whom he has saved to an eternal heavenly hope.

1 Cor 2:9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

2.3. The Word "Rapture"

"The Doctrine of the Rapture is a "bogus doctrine" because the word "rapture" does not appear in the Bible."

This anti-Rapture argument has been given by various "popularizers" throughout time and needs to be addressed. A clever popular response might be "SO WHAT", yet a more sophisticated argument is needed.

First, in order to disprove a doctrine, one must deal with it from the text. If someone wants to refute the Jehovah's Witness's notion of the 144,000, one must go to Rev 7 & 14 and show that the 144K are specifically future genetic Jews, of the seed of Abraham, called out and sealed by the Father to secure the Land promised to Abraham and not persons living today and waiting for their heavenly hope. Secondly, the fact that a doctrine is not "named" in Scripture does not mean that it is false. As often stated the doctrine of the Trinity is not explicitly mentioned, and in fact the word Trinity is not found in either the Hebrew or Greek Scriptures. Yet, the doctrine of the Trinity is easily "exegeted from the text" and is fundamental to Salvation and to our understanding of the nature of God and to "the nature of nature". Finally, this type of argument is generally a deflection tactic - often to get a "babe in Christ" questioning the doctrine without looking into it further, thereby keeping saints in an immature state.

The word "Rapture" is actually an English transliteration of the Latin word "Rapere" or "Rapio", which is the word used in Jerome's Latin Vulgate in translating the inspired Greek word (ἁρπαζω - harpadzo - meaning "to carry off swiftly"). The following verse is the actual text from Jerome's Latin Vulgate:

1 Thes 4:17 deinde nos qui vivimus qui relinquimur simul **rapiemur** cum illis in nubibus obviam Domino in aera et sic semper cum Domino erimus

³ This is Paul's inspired accounting of the demonic mindset. Demons truly believe that they can countermand the Will of God. They believe that history can be changed, modified at the whim of man or demon. This is an inspired accounting of Open Theism, i.e., the belief that the future is not settled, but can be changed through the actions of the creation itself (e.g., man or demon).

Thus, we are compelled to conclude that using the word "Rapture" to describe what might be more formally termed "Harpooning" is not so bad a label after all. It may not be the "inspired word" used for the coming of Christ for His body, but it is the word used in the Latin Text to describe this event. Therefore, we must conclude that this "lack of appearance argument" is indeed the "bogus one".

2.4. Striving To Master One's Eternal Hope

(1) "Eschatology or Bible Prophecy is not important to the Christian Walk". (2) "I am not interested in "where" I end up in God's eternal program it is good enough for me to know that I will be there." (3) "You Rapturists are all messed up. I am a Pan-Rapturist. What do mean by that? It will all "pan" out in the end!"

How often have we heard such statements from Evangelicals? Yet, the Scriptures clearly teach that understanding one's eternal hope is fundamental to one's maturity and manifesting oneself as a saint to other saints.

Heb 6:18 That by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, **who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope** set before us:
19 **Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast...**

While the book of Hebrews is written to Israel's 3rd Generation, the general principle of the fundamental importance of one's hope is clearly defined. The writer of Hebrews states that one's eternal hope is fundamental to a healthy soul; indeed it is called the "anchor of the soul". How then can we allow preachers and teachers to minimize the mastery of Eschatology and Biblical Prophecy? Knowing one's hope, where one will be spending eternity, and what one will be doing for eternity is of CREEDAL IMPORTANCE. Let no one diminish the importance of the saint's eternal hope and its mastery thereof.

In light of this fact, Paul specifically charges Timothy and all Body-saints generally:

2 Tim 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

3. NATURE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RAPTURE

While there are many characteristics of the Rapture only three will be discussed in this section.

3.1. The "Speed" of the Rapture

1 Co 15:51 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

The Rapture is explicitly stated to be a "quick" event and described as "a moment" and happening within a "twinkling of an eye".

(1) **A Moment.** Paul states that the Rapture will take place within (inside) a "moment" of time. How fast is this or better yet, how small is this moment of time? The Greek word translated as moment is (ατομος), from which we get our English word "atom". To the Greeks the "atom" was something that could no longer be divided down to the next level. An atom is something then that is indivisible. Here Paul however states that it will occur "in" or "within" an indivisible atom of time. Furthermore, our Greek word "atom" is a compound word from "α" (meaning "not" [negation]) and "τεμνω" meaning "to cut". The idea behind the compound word is "not to cut", that is "it can not be cut any further". In other words, when the Rapture happens it will take place *faster* than anyone can observe.

In Quantum Mechanics (a branch of Modern Physics) we can determine the measure of certain elements within a certain amount. This is expressed by the following very simple equation:

$$dE * dT >= \hbar$$

where,

dE = energy

dT = time

\hbar = Planck's constant divided by 2π

This is also known as Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle.⁴ Under this interpretation the above equation states that if one knows an element within a particular "uncertainty", then one can only hope to determine its related quantity within a certain limit, which is related to Planck's constant (6.62559×10^{-34} J-s). Planck's constant as can be seen is a very small number, so that we might expect that the Rapture will take place "quite rapidly".⁵ For sake of argument let's quantify this and ascertain an "order of magnitude". If we say that we know the amount of energy of an event to within +/- 1 Joule (dE), then we can plug that value into our equation above and ascertain our time constraint (dT). Roughly on the order of 10^{-34} seconds.

(2) **The Twinkling.** Here the Greek word is (ῥιπτη) and means "stroke" or "beat". It is interesting that every time one blinks his eyes, the molecules in the eyes responsible for "interpreting color" "reset themselves" on the order of a few pico-seconds. If these little molecules took longer to reset, we would see color "fade in" to our view as we kept our eyes open longer.

So in conclusion, the Rapture takes place faster than man can observe it.

3.2. The "Mystery" Nature of the Rapture

A "mystery" is something not yet revealed in the Scripture, hidden from the cosmos, but now revealed. Examples of such "mysteries" are: (1) Mysteries of Israel's Kingdom⁶ [Mat 13] (that Israel as a nation will experience a nephilimic incursion), (2) The Body of Christ (a group of redeemed sinners to be placed in authority over the angels and to be Christ's righteous extended non-incarnate humanity, and sit with Him upon the Father's throne ruling the entire created order).

It stands to reason that if the Body of Christ is itself a "mystery", hidden from before the foundations of the world, then so also must its "earthly ending" be a mystery. The following passages define the Body-age (Body of Christ) as a mystery.

Rom 16:25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, **according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,**

26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:

1 Cor 2:7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, *even* the hidden *wisdom*, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known *it*, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

Eph 3:1 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,

2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:

3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words,

4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)

5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;

6 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

Col 2:24 Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:

25 Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;

26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:

27 To whom God would make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

The notion that a group of redeemed sinners, ordained to be non-ethnic in nature, and in authority over the angels, ruling the entire created order was not seen in the Old Testament and not revealed until Paul. Paul was given the "gospel of the mystery" the "dispensation of the Body of Christ".

⁴ The Uncertainty Principle was formulated by Werner Heisenberg in 1927. The interpretation given to this equation by the overwhelming number of modern physicists is called the Copenhagen Interpretation. In a popular way, this can be expressed "as an inherent uncertainty" in the universe. The Copenhagen interpretation is one of many schools of Interpretation. For a more Biblical View of Quantum Mechanics see Phillip W. Dennis, PhD, **Probability and Quantum Mechanics: A Christian Theistic Interpretation**, *Proceedings of the Fourth International Conference on Creationism*, Editor: R.E. Walsh, Creation Science Fellowship, Inc, Pittsburgh, PA, 1998, pp.167-200.

⁵ This latter discussion of the Uncertainty Principle is more for entertainment and not for explicit calculation of the speed of the Rapture event.

⁶ Robert Walsh, **The Parables of Christ**, 2002 TGF Bible Conference, Trinity Grace Fellowship, Pittsburgh, PA, 2002

Part of the mystery of the Rapture is that all Body saints will not die. Some are alive at the Rapture event itself. Only if the Body of Christ is of a different dispensation than that of Israel, does this statement of Paul's makes sense, since it was well known in the Old Testament that both living and dead Jewish saints enter the kingdom (Rev 7 & 14 [144K] and dead Jews entering into the Millennial Kingdom [Ez 37]). 1 Cor 15:51 can only refer to a group that has not yet been discussed in Scripture until Paul, namely the Body of Christ.

3.3. Is the Rapture "Immanent"?

Most pre-Tribulation Rapturists defend their position with the doctrine known as *Immanency*. Immanency means that no other event is needed for the Rapture to occur. In other words, the next event on God's prophetic calendar is the Rapture. Is this true or is this a "simplistic view"? The author here argues that it is simplistic.

While there is no "event" in God's prophetic calendar that needs to occur before the Rapture, Paul does describe certain "characteristics" that will characterize the "Last Days" of the Body-age.

- 2 Tim 3:1 This know also, **that in the last days perilous times shall come.**
- 2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,
- 3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,
- 4 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;
- 5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.
- 6 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,
- 7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.
- 8 Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.
- 9 But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all *men*, as theirs also was.

Here Paul states that during the end of the Body-age certain features will characterize the so-called conservative-evangelical-fundamentalists of that time. He also describes this time as "perilous" and what follows are the elements which make this time perilous. Yet, skipping over the elements to verse 5 notice Paul's description of the people characterized by these traits - "having a form of godliness..."

Even though there may be no single event needed for the Rapture to occur, a general consensus or character of the Body-age's last days are in view. Moreover, and very important, is the attempting to ask the question "are we there yet?" Rather than saying "yes" or "no", we will provide the algorithm to answer this question. The Last Days of the Body-age will be in place **"when ALL of the criteria enumerated in 2 Tim 3:1-9 are in place simultaneously"**. If all but one criteria are in place, then none of them are in place. The following figure illustrates the relationship of the "latter times", "last days" and the Rapture.

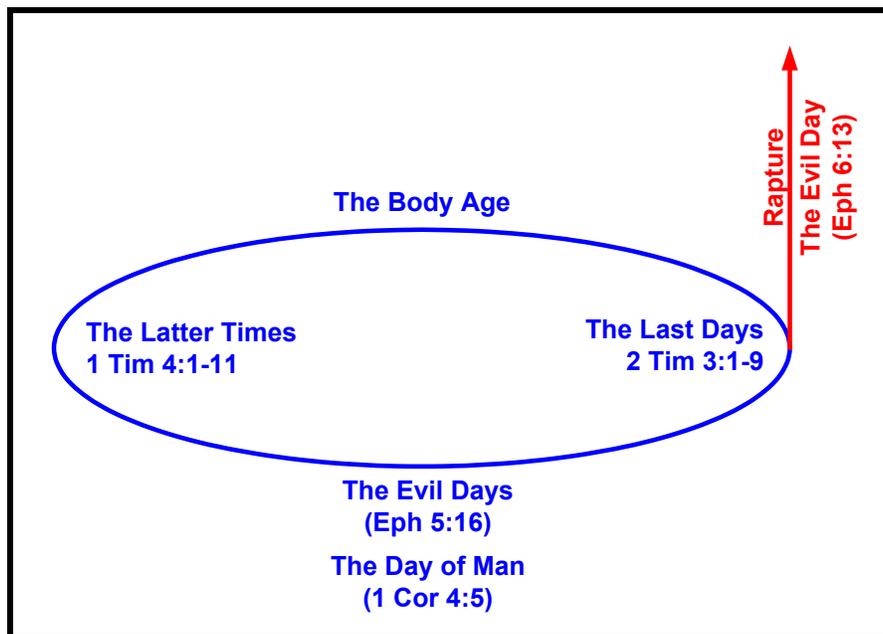


Figure 1. The Body-Age and the Rapture

Note that the "latter times" began in Paul's day as indicated by the "apostasy" of Asia Minor.

2 Tim 1:15 This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.

4. THE DAY OF THE LORD AND THE TIMING OF THE RAPTURE

To properly understand the timing of the Rapture it is required that we understand the Biblical concept of the Day of the Lord. As we will see the solution/proof as to the timing of the Rapture is found in a context that explicitly discusses the Rapture with the Day of the Lord.

4.1. An Overview of the Day of the Lord

While the topic of the Day of the Lord (DOL) is yet another one that deserves much more attention, here it will be briefly discussed.⁷ The DOL is a topic rich in Old and New Testament discussion and concern. It has various names throughout the Scriptures, namely, "day of the Lord", "the day", "that day", "the great day", etc.

To summarize, the "Day of the Lord (Jehovah)" is that period of time whereby God deals with Israel as a nation, refining her to be His earth-ruling-priestly-nation for the entire Gentile world. It also includes the time when Israel's hope comes to fruition.

A "general" reference to the DOL is found in Isa 2:12-21.

12 For the **day of the LORD** of hosts *shall be* upon every *one that is* proud and lofty, and upon every *one that is* lifted up; and he shall be brought low:
 13 And upon all the cedars of Lebanon, *that are* high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan,
 14 And upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills *that are* lifted up,
 15 And upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall,
 16 And upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures.
 17 And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day.
 18 And the idols he shall utterly abolish.
 19 And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.
 20 In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made *each one* for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats;
 21 To go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.
 22 Cease ye from man, whose breath *is* in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?

It is the time when Jehovah shakes the "trees" of Israel and rids the nation of evil and despair. The nation shall be sifted like wheat, and the entire earth system shall be reconfigured in preparation for the Millennial Kingdom. Also in Isa 13:6-13,

6 Howl ye; for the **day of the LORD** *is* at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.
 7 Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart shall melt:
 8 And they shall be afraid: pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth: they shall be amazed one at another; their faces *shall be* as flames.
 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.

Additional passages are Ez 13:5; 30:3; Joel 1:15; 2:1,11,31; 3:14; Amos 5:18(2),20; Ob 15; Zeph 1:7,14(2); Zech 14:1; Mal 4:5; Acts 2:20; 1 Thes 5:2; 2 Thes 2:2; 2 Pet 3:10. A concordance can be utilized to trace down the other phrases used for the DOL, such as, "the day", "that day", and "the great day".

An examination of these passages shows that the time included in the term DOL, starts with the Rapture and continues through eternity.

⁷ Modified from Robert Walsh, **A Survey of the Millennial Kingdom**, Trinity Grace Fellowship, Pittsburgh, PA, pp.5-6. See also, TGF Eldership, **The Day of the Lord**, Proceedings of the 2005 TGF Bible Conference, Pittsburgh, PA

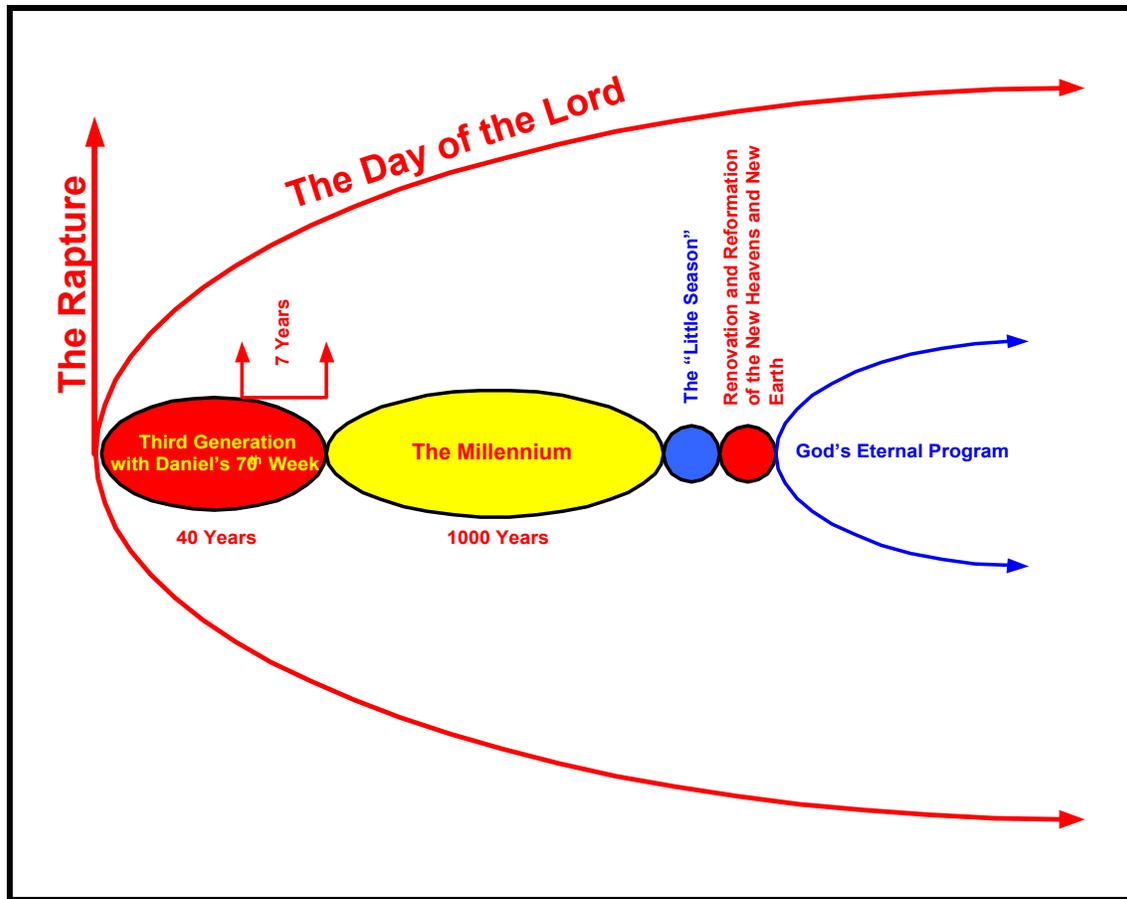


Figure 2. The Rapture and the Day of the Lord

To summarize, the DOL comprises:

- Israel's Third Generation
- The Millennium
- The "Little Season"
- Renovation of the Heavens and Earth by Fire
- Great White Throne Judgment
- The Eternal Kingdom

4.2. An Exegetical Overview of 1 Thes 5:1-11

To pinpoint the "relative" location in time when the Rapture occurs, we only need look at one Biblical reference: 1 Thes 5:1-11. We provide a summary of these passages.

- 1 Thes 5:1 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**, 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.

A careful examination of the passages above shows that Paul is performing a "word play" as enumerated below:

Night == Darkness == Day of the Lord
Light == Day == *Body-age*

Verse 1-3:

Paul states that the Thessalonians need no further help regarding their knowledge of end time events because he has already covered these things with them in detail. Paul says that they know these things *perfectly* (or precisely, just as an acrobat must walk precisely on the tight rope not to fall). Paul begins the first "word play" in verse 2 by equating the "**Day of the Lord**" with "**the night**", and the **coming** of the Day of the Lord as a "**thief in the night**". It is in the Night when the "travail" occurs. This usage of "travail" has been previously well established to refer to the experience of Israel during the 3rd Generation.⁸

Verse 4:

Next Paul clearly states the "you all" (the Body saints of Thessalonica) are categorically NOT in the darkness (night) - that "THAT DAY" (Day of the Lord) should over take them.

Verse 5:

Again Paul categorically states that "you all" (the Body saints of Thessalonica) are children of light indeed children of day; and continues by categorically stating that we are **NOT** (Greek emphatic) of the night **NOR** the darkness.

Verse 6:

Since "sleeping" is normally done at night, Body saints ought to be awake (perfectly sober and of sound mind).

Verse 7-9:

Let those that sleep, sleep in the night, and let us who are of the day be sober. For true Body saints have put on the breastplate (thorax) of faith and love and the helmet of salvation's hope (the hope of the Body). Thus, while we are in the day we are to put on the breastplate and helmet of salvation which are detailed for us in Ephesians 6 as part of the armor by which the Body saint today prepares himself for the obtaining of salvation (verse 9) [the appropriation of the Hope as detailed in the Rapture-Battle - Eph 6].

Verse 10&11:

Christ's death has appropriated our success and salvation, and as a result we should forever live together with Him. It is in this context that we are to build each other up in doctrine, faith, and practice. This edification of each other is the true manner in which saints demonstrate their love for one another.

Summary

The Rapture takes place prior to the Day of the Lord, and as we have seen in other studies and outlines, the Rapture precedes the entire 3rd Generation of Israel, and is therefore more correctly called the "Pre Third Generation Rapture" or "Pre-Day-of-the-Lord-Rapture".

4.3. Traditional Positions**Problem of the Standard Proofs**

A glance at almost any book from the standard Pre-Tribulation position will reveal that most Pre-Tribulation arguments rest on the notion of the "immanency" of Christ's return for His Body. By "immanency" we mean that NOTHING needs to take place on God's prophetic calendar before the Rapture occurs. Early Walvoord⁹ essentially maintains that nothing is required before the Rapture takes place. His arguments are based on confusion over the distinctiveness of Paul's gospel w.r.t. the Kingdom gospel. As a result, he often applies clearly Jewish events to the Body (i.e., John 14:3 - going to my Father's mansion to prepare a place for you). Regarding signs given to the church that precede the Rapture, J. Dwight Pentecost outright states:

To the church no such signs were given.¹⁰

Both men completely ignore 1 Tim 4:1-16, which discusses the "latter times" of the Body age, and 2 Tim 3:1-9 which deals with the "last days" of the Body age. Both these passages deny and clearly contradict the doctrine of "immanency". Interestingly, latter Walvoord¹¹ *almost* gets the point when defending against Robert H. Gundry's "*dispensational* post-Tribulationism".¹²

⁸ Recall that Messiah is born **before** the travail, and that the entire nation is born **via** the travail.

⁹ John F. Walvoord, **The Rapture Question**, Zondervan Publishing, Grand Rapids, MI, 1954,1964, pp.69-76.

¹⁰ J. Dwight Pentecost, *op cit*, p.203.

¹¹ John F. Walvoord, **The Blessed Hope and the Tribulation**, Zondervan Publishing, Grand Rapids, MI, 1976, pp.108-121.

¹² Robert H. Gundry, **The Church and the Tribulation: A Biblical Examination of Posttribulationism**, Zondervan Publishing, Grand Rapids, MI, 1973, 1979.

In the past 100 years, no greater doctrine of Scripture has generated more controversy as has men's opinions on the so-called Rapture of the Church (Body of Christ). There are essentially three views in evangelicalism today regarding the timing of the Rapture:

4.3.1. Post-Tribulational Position

The **Post-Tribulation Rapture**¹³ position states that the Rapture occurs after the end of Daniel's 70th week, implying that the Body of Christ experiences the entire Tribulation period.

4.3.2. Mid-Tribulational Position

The **Mid-Tribulation Rapture**¹⁴ position states that the Rapture occurs sometime in the middle of Daniel's 70th week. There are many "variations on a theme" regarding the specific timing of the Rapture in this position. Some place it at the 1st Trumpet plague, others, at the last trumpet plague, while others place it at the resurrection of the two witnesses.

4.3.3. Pre-Wrath Position

Though some may wish to deny it, Marv Rosenthal's **"Pre-Wrath" Rapture**¹⁵ position is a form of Mid-Tribulationism.

4.3.4. Pre-Tribulational Position

The **Pre-Tribulation Rapture**¹⁶ position states that the Rapture occurs before Daniel's 70th week. The time between the Rapture and the beginning of Daniel's 70th week is often disputed or simply ignored.

4.3.5. The Partial Rapture Position

The **Partial Rapture**¹⁷ position states that various members of the Church are taken up at each of the above times based upon one's "sanctified" state at the time of the particular "rapture". Thus, if one is "really" spiritual then he is taken up at the Pre-Trib rapture while those less fortunate wait for the remaining "raptures".

5. THE RAPTURE AND THE DAY OF CHRIST

To be added (TBA).

6. THE RAPTURE-BATTLE

The Rapture-Battle is described for us in Eph 6:10-18. This section takes a brief look at that set of Scripture along with other relevant Scriptures.

6.1. The Body-Age Defined as the "Evil Days"

Eph 5:15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,
16 Redeeming the time, because **the days are evil**.

Paul characterizes the days of the Body of Christ as "evil [plural] days [plural]", and in this context tells the Ephesian Body saints to redeem the times in which they walk. We are commanded to walk "circumspectly" in these evil days (5:15). The Greek word for "circumspectly" is the word from which we get our English word *acrobat*. As an acrobat must be "precise" in his footing, so must the Body saint be precise in his Pauline walk during this age. And in this walk we are commanded to be wise (5:17). In walking precisely in Paul's gospel Body saints prepare themselves during this age for the Rapture-Battle. Paul calls the Body age "the evil days" because the Mystery of Iniquity (2 Thes 2:7) is hard at work, producing the "anti-body", the false and counterfeit church - indeed the most despicable enemy of the true church.

6.2. The Rapture Defined as the Great Evil Day

Eph 6:13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in **the evil day**, and having done all, to stand.

The day of the Rapture is called "the evil the day", here both noun (day) and adjective (evil) are articulated in the Greek text. This is to be thought of as the "great evil day" in its most emphatic form. It is the great evil day, because the "restrainer" is taken out of the way (2 Thes 2:6), and evil runs wild upon the earth without restraint. Moreover, and perhaps more relevant to Paul's immediate discussion concerning the Body of Christ is that the day of the Rapture is the day in which Satan and his un-merry band of demons try to thwart the Body's ascension (Rapture). More will be discussed on this verse below, when discussing Eph 6 in general.

¹³Gundry, *ibid*, 1979

¹⁴Norman B. Harrison, **The End**, Harrison Service, Minneapolis, MN, 1941.

¹⁵Marvin Rosenthal, **The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church**, Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, TN, 1992

¹⁶J. Dwight Pentecost, **Things to Come**, Zondervan, Gand Rapids, MI, 1958, 1977.

¹⁷G.H. Lang, **The Revelation of Jesus Christ**, Scribner & Sons, New York, NY, 1874.

6.3. The Body's Preparation for the Rapture Battle

Eph 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*.

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

Paul through the Body Armor of Ephesians 6 tells us how we are to work-out, exercise, and prepare for this great Battle.

Verse 11:

We are to "put on" [Εἰδύω - Aorist, Imperative, Middle] the armor which God has supplied. That this word is in the Middle Voice, clearly shows that it is the "new man" through regeneration empowering the Body saint to "suit up". Indeed, we are told to put on the entire (whole) armor of God. The word for whole armor is πανοπλή from πας (all, each) and οπλον meaning (weaponry, armaments). The "evil days" are our "Boot Camp" whereby we suffer (Rom 8:17, 18) as "good soldiers" of Christ (remarkably similar thoughts [2 Tim 2:3]).

Rom 8:17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that **we suffer with *him***, that **we may be also glorified together**.

18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

2 Tim 2:3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

Since Paul is our example (1 Cor 11:1) our life ought to be similar to that of Paul's life as he describes it (2 Tim 4:7, 8).

1 Cor 11:1 Be ye followers of me, even as I also *am* of Christ.

2 Tim 4:7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith:

8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

We are to suit up with this great armor so that we "stand" (ἵστημι - to stand) against the wiles (μεθοδεῖα=methods) of Satan. Notice that we are fighting against a spiritual being and his forces - the demons behind the "flesh and blood".

Verse 12:

We are not (οὐκ -emphatic "no" - strong negation) wrestling physical persons, but with high spiritual leaders, i.e., Satan and his hordes. Now how can this be, for the beings that have persecuted the church are clearly human beings? Paul's point is that our true battle is with the demons "behind" the human beings that persecute true saints. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit "behind" (rather leading) the Body, while Satan and his demons are behind those, who speak against and persecute the Body of Christ. Those that persecute the Body of Christ are precisely the "anti-body".

Verses 13-17:

Wherefore (actually "because of this"), that is, because we are fighting against principalities and powers, we are to take up this great armor so that we may be able to withstand (αντιστημι = ATTACK) in the Evil Day. We are to do all that we can to STAND today, that we might be able to ANTISTAND (or attack) in the evil day. Thus, today is the day of preparation for this battle; the church age is the age of preparation => our Boot Camp.

The armor of God (the One Father God) by which the Body saint is to put on is presented in the form of an Introversion and beautifully correlates with the seven Ones of Ephesians 4:4-6:

Eph 4:4 *There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

6 One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.

Girdle of Truth (girded by the One Baptism)

Breastplate of Righteousness (of the One Lord Jesus Christ)

Boots of the Gospel of this Peace (in the One Body - Jewless, Gentileless)

Shield of the One Faith

Helmet of (the One Hope) this Salvation

Sword of the (One Spirit)

The Armor of God is precisely that instrument which prepares the Body saint for that great day of evil, when the Body fights through the domain of Satan (Eph 2:2) and rightfully takes its hope. The Panoply of God is the mastering of and submitting to Paul's gospel - the Great Mystery. This mastery of Paul's gospel in light of the seven ones is clearly seen in Eph 4:7-16.

Eph 4:7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.
 8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.
 9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?
 10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)
 11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;
 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:
 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:
 14 That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;
 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ:
 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love

Today (the evil days) we are to stand against the "methods" of Satan - our posture is a defensive one (standing), while in the evil day we take the offensive (attack). The following table illustrates the contrast between our present warfare with that of the Rapture-Battle.

A COMPARISON BETWEEN OUR PRESENT WARFARE AND THE RAPTURE-BATTLE	
PRESENT WARFARE	ASCENSION-RAPTURE BATTLE
Against all angels opposing Paul's gospel (Gal 1:8-12) Gal 1:8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any <i>man</i> preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. 10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. 11 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. 12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught <i>it</i> , but by the revelation of Jesus Christ	Against Satan and all angels opposing Paul's gospel Rom 16:20 And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ <i>be</i> with you. Amen.
Designated THE DAYS (plural) are EVIL (plural) Eph 5:16	Designated THE DAY (singular) THE WICKED (singular) Eph 6:13
Body posture is defensive; it is to "stand" = "defend" in demonic territory against demonic attack.	Body posture is offensive; it is to "anti-stand" = "attack" Satan and his demons in order to possess Body territory (= the hope) on the Throne of God in the Third heaven.

Table 1. Our Present Warfare and Rapture Warfare

This day of battle is also called the day of fire (1 Cor 3:13)¹⁸ and clearly associates the Rapture-Battle with the judgment seat of Christ (see below).

1 Cor 3:13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for **the day** shall declare it, because it shall be **revealed by fire**; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is

Christ began His earthly ministry with a direct conflict with Satan at His temptations (Mat 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-15), with no human intervention.

Mat 4:1 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.
 2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred.
 3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.
 4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.
 5 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,
 6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.
 7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.
 8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;
 9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.
 10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.
 11 Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

Once His temptations were completed his "wrestling" ministry consisted mostly with human rulers (Pharisees, Sadducees, and false Israel). These were the "anti-Israel" of Christ's day. Christ's ministry prepared Him for the ultimate triumph over Satan, and able to cry from the torture stake, "it is finished". The redemptive price was complete and He was then successfully and most willingly crucified.

The Body mimics Christ's earthly humanity in many respects and our "earthly walk" is no exception. The Body began with a direct demonic affliction of Paul (2 Cor 12:9).

2 Cor 12:9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Notice that Paul asks three times to be released from this demonic bondage; the answer he is given is, "My Grace is sufficient for thee". Notice there is no angelic mediation or comfort. Paul is directly comforted via the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of Grace. Contrast this with Christ's 2 sets of three Temptations whereupon Christ is afterward sent angels of the Father for comfort (Mat 4:11). Similarly, at Gethsemane Christ prays three times for this cup to be removed - the Father's Grace was also sufficient.

6.4. The Rapture-Battle Proper

Upon Christ's passion and resurrection He ascended to the Father at least twice. Christ humiliated Satan by parading the devil about, leading Satan and his hordes captive (Eph 4:8 [leading the captivity (demons) captive (defeated)]. The Body mimics Christ in this defeat by passing through the realm of Satan and his hordes (for he is the prince of the powers of the air) and taking our hope (the Father's throne). Like Christ, the Body ascends to the angelic clouds whereby we fight Satan and again like Christ utterly defeat him (Rom 16:20) under our feet.

Rom 16:20 And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

¹⁸ For a more detailed discussion of the "Assessment" at the Rapture-Battle, see Stephen Rodabaugh, **The Judgment Seat of Christ**, *The Pauline Bootcamp: Session 9*, Trinity Grace Fellowship, Pittsburgh, PA, 2005

The following table summarizes the characteristics of the preparation and Rapture Battle.

THE BODY'S MIMICKING OF CHRIST IN PREPARATION AND BATTLE	
CHRIST	BODY
<p>Christ began His ministry defending against Satan directly at the temptations. The mode of preparation was the articulation of Scripture. This was a direct Satanic attack upon Christ. Christ took no physical action himself, but "defended" via the Scriptures.</p> <p>Direct demonic activity (no humans involved)!</p>	<p>Paul began his Body ministry with the direct buffeting of a demon. He took no physical action to correct this matter.</p> <p>Direct demonic activity (no humans involved)!</p>
<p>Christ's main ministry after the Temptations was with "flesh and blood" via the Pharisees, Sadducees, and apostate Israel. These are the "anti-Israel". Until His passion this aspect of ministry was defending and articulating the Jewish scriptures. Christ took no physical action against these physical persons, but "defended" via the Scriptures.</p> <p>No direct demonic attack outside of physical creatures. The demons are behind the human rulers.</p>	<p>Paul's ministry consisted of defending the Body-gospel against reprobate Jews and Gentiles. These were men and women of "flesh and blood" (the anti-body). This ministry was primarily defending and articulating the Body gospel. He took no physical action against these physical persons, but defensive using the Scripture (Acts 28:31).</p> <p>No direct demonic attack outside of physical creatures. The demons are behind the human rulers.</p>
<p>Christ parades Satan about, "leading captivity captive" (Eph 4:8).</p> <p>Eph 4:8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto me</p> <p>Direct attacking upon demons (no "flesh and blood" involved).</p>	<p>The Body humiliates Satan (Rom 16:20).</p> <p>Rom 16:20 And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.</p> <p>Direct attacking upon demons (no "flesh and blood" involved).</p>

Table 2. The Body's Mimicking of Christ - Before and During the Rapture Battle

6.5. The Rapture-Battle Assessment

The success of a Body's saint is manifested in the Rapture-Battle and declared at the Judgment Seat of Christ [or Bema] (Rom 14:10; 2 Cor 5:10).¹⁹ Details of this declaration are discussed in 1 Cor 3:10-15.

Every Body-saint successfully participates in the Rapture-Battle. The criterion of success is Paul's Gospel (Pauline Law) and the mastery thereof:

Rom 2:16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ **according to my gospel**.

The specific assessment is seen in 1 Cor 3:7-13

- 7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.
- 8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.
- 9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.
- 10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.
- 11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.
- 12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;
- 13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.
- 14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.
- 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

(1) Note that while God uses others outside of Himself, it is God Who "gives the increase". God has ordained every saint's success and reward.

(2) Our work will be manifested through fire and if we correlate this with Eph 6, we see that the "fire" mentioned here correlate to the "fiery darts of the devil".

¹⁹ Rodabaugh, *ibid*, 2005
Robert E. Walsh

6.6. Summary

The doctrine of the Rapture is fundamental to the faith and maturity of the Body-saint. The Rapture is our "comfort", so how can we ignore "such a great salvation"? How can we permit others to discourage us from mastering our hope? We must not allow others to quench the Scriptures and we must go on and manifest ourselves as mature saints ready for the Battle of the Great Evil Day. The Rapture is truly part of our Blessed Hope:

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