

**PRE-TRIB RAPTURE: MYSTERY or MYTH
DISPENSATIONALISM: DIVINE or DELUSION
IMMINENCY: INSPIRED or IMAGINATION**

I find no evidence in scripture supporting the doctrine of a pre-trib rapture. Secondly: I believe dispensational theology to be completely opposed to the character of God.

"For I am the LORD, I change not..."

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever. "

"...the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

"For there is no respect of persons with God "

"Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart...a great God, a mighty and terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward. "

One could hardly be a student of dispensational theology and not be aware of the obvious underlying, or unstated teaching of it.

Dispensational theology exhibits a god who changes throughout time.

"Lest thou shouldest ponder the path of life, her ways are movable that thou canst not know them."

Dispensational theology also conveys a god which has a distinct respect for the biological/ethnical Jew.

These two demonstrable aspects of dispensational theology are in conflict with the nature and person of the true and living God.

Another obvious flaw of dispensational theology is that it's logically fallible.

It is taught by its proponents that the only means to correctly understanding and/or interpreting the scriptures is through the lens of dispensational theology.

The problem here is that one must first be equipped with dispensational theology to understand from scripture that only through dispensational theology, are they able to understand scripture.

Therefore, dispensational theology is logically self refuting.

If dispensational theology fails, and it obviously does, both scripturally and logically, the pre-trib rapture teaching completely falls, for it cannot stand without dispensational theology.

Nevertheless, I am willing to hear the arguments of the pre-tribbers.

Now concerning the blessed hope: I would argue that the "blessed hope" is the resurrection of the saints and not the catching up of the saints.

Pre-tribbers and most post-tribbers combine the resurrection and the rapture. They use the term rapture to refer to the combination of both events. This is a sleight of men and cunning craftiness. The focal point of Christianity is Christ: the resurrection and the life.

HE is our hope!

Other scriptures which confirm the resurrection is our hope are: Acts 23:6, 24:25, 26:6-8, 1 Corinthians 15:1-58, and Colossians 1:1-29, to name a few.

While 1 Corinthians is fresh on our minds, it would be a convenient time to challenge the teaching of pre-trib and most post-trib students that 1 Corinthians 15:50-52 is a rapture passage and that it (the rapture) happens in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. First of all, the catching up of the saints is not mentioned in the passage, nor is it mentioned anywhere in the entire chapter. Yes, one could infer it or inject it into the passage, but that's my point. It must be inferred because it's not there! The focus of 1 Corinthians 15 is the hope of the resurrection of the dead and the change of the living (those saints alive at his return). Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, therefore, before any saint can be caught up, they must be changed.

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall ALL be CHANGED, 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." Emphasis mine.

The MYSTERY in this passage is not the catching up of the saints, but rather, that those alive in Christ at his return will also be changed (glorified), as well as the dead in Christ.

So we now see that what happens in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, is the change. No catching up is mentioned anywhere in the chapter.

Our blessed hope is the change. Such is the point of 1 John 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. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he [God] is pure." Bracketed mine.

The hope that causes us to purify ourselves, is the hope of being changed at his appearing.
"...we shall be like him..."

Now that it has been clearly established from scripture, that the resurrection is in fact a separate happening than the catching up, one must challenge the pre-trib doctrine of "Imminency".

There is a prophecy that must be fulfilled before the catching up of the saints. The resurrection of the dead in Christ and the change of those alive in Christ at his return, must happen prior to the catching up. This is in complete harmony with
1 Thessalonians 4:13-17

"...the dead in Christ shall rise [resurrect] first, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up TOGETHER with them..."
Bracketed and emphasis mine.

So we see that AFTER the change, the glorified saints are caught up (raptured) together.

Now that we clearly see, from scripture, that the change of the saints at Christ's return (the resurrection of the dead in Christ and the glorification of those saints alive at his coming), precedes the catching up or rapture of the saints at the Lord's return, then we MUST acknowledge that there is, no doubt, an unfulfilled prophecy that must come to pass before the rapture will occur.

Now, having acknowledged such to be the case, one would be inclined to wonder if there were any signs which must occur prior to the resurrection?

The answer to this is an emphatic: YES!

Job 14:12

"So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep. "

If one would compare this passage to Revelation 6:14, they would no doubt see the harmony and consistency of the scriptures.

"And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together..."

Thank you for your listening ear and much valuable time,

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