

The Blessed Hope!

“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;” –(Titus 2:13)

Diamond & Nugget #2

Some people want to frequently take a single passage of Scripture and build their doctrine upon it, rather than considering ALL of what Scripture has to say about the subject. This principle is certainly true when it comes to the events of the end times.

The Rapture is missing from all the Resurrection prophecies of the Old Testament. The Hebrew Scriptures spelled out very clearly that there was to be a resurrection from the dead of all saints of past ages. Some of the Greek Scriptures added to this line of prophecy about the resurrection of the Old Testament saints. The final book of Revelation even adds that the saints who die during the Great Tribulation will be raised at the very same time. These prophecies tell plainly when this particular resurrection will occur.

1. Job 19:25-27 When the Redeemer stands upon the earth in the latter days.
2. Isaiah 25:6-9 When the Messiah restores all things.
3. Isaiah 26:19-21 At the conclusion of Messiah's indignation.
4. Hosea 13:9-14 When the Great King will save Israel.
5. Daniel 12:1-3 At the time of the “end” of the tribulation period.
6. Daniel 12:13 At the “end” of the prophesied days of Israel's trouble.
7. John 11:24 At the “last day”.
8. Luke 14:14 At the resurrection of the Just.
9. Acts 24:15 Resurrection of the Just.
10. Revelation 20:4-6 After the Great Tribulation, at the beginning of the Millennium.

Read all these passages very carefully. There is one thing common to all these passages and that is the fact that the Rapture of the Church of Jesus Christ is MISSING! I'm talking about Old Testament saints. It is easy to overlook this yet it is an important fact in God's Word

It is simply not to be found! That there is the resurrection of all the Old Testament saints to glorified life on earth is Scripturally factual. That the Tribulation saints join this resurrection from the dead is Scripturally factual. That this resurrection occurs at the very end of the Great Tribulation at the second coming of the Jewish Messiah to rule and reign on earth is Scripturally factual.

That these passages talk about the unique translation of Church saints, both those who are resurrected from the dead and living saints, into the air to meet Christ and return with Him to heaven IS NOT FACTUAL — IS NOT GIVEN — IS MISSING from all these passages. What does this mean for us?

The only conclusion is that the Rapture is distinct and different. Likewise, since it is MISSING — NOT THERE — it could only have happened at an earlier date! But this is not to negate the idea that the Rapture being found in the Old Testament.

The Rapture is very clearly mentioned in the Old Testament in Daniel 12:2: **"And many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt."** When we look at the context of this verse and then compare it with other Scriptures, we can clearly see that this verse is speaking of our being gathered up to Jesus Christ at His coming just as it is detailed in 1st Thessalonians 4:13-17.

In Daniel 12:1, Michael, who stands guard over Israel, will stand aside (the word "arise" [NASB] is an idiom that conveys an arising to allow someone or something to pass by or through) and then Jeremiah 30:7 will be fulfilled: **"Alas! for that day is great, there is none like it; and it is the time of Jacob's distress, but he will be saved from it."** This is exactly what the Apostle Paul is speaking of in 2nd Thessalonians 2 when he says that before the day of the Lord begins the lawless one will be revealed - when the one (Michael) who restrains him will stand out of the way. This happens at the mid-point of Daniel's seventieth week -(Daniel 9:27). Then in the Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24, He tells us exactly the sequence of events to take place just before the Rapture. Jesus tells us that after the lawless one - the abominator - is revealed **"there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall"** -(Matthew 24:21).

This is exactly what Daniel has said in 12:1, **"And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time."** This time spoken of in Daniel 12:1 and Matthew 24:21 is the worst time that the Jews and the elect (saints) will ever experience. Now the context of Matthew 24 is directed toward the elect and the context of Daniel 12 is directed toward the nation of Israel, therefore this difficult time, as bad as it will be, will not be the worst time ever on the earth. That degree of severity is reserved for when God pours out His wrath in the Day of the Lord judgment.

Jesus goes on to say **"and unless those days had been cut short no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short"** - (Matthew 24:22). This is what Daniel is saying in the last part of 12:1: **"and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued."** Both passages are talking about the day yet future when the lawless one (Antichrist) persecutes the woman (Israel) and her offspring (the saints) in Revelation 12:13, 17 and 13:7. Then Christ, with the sign of the end of the age and the sign of His coming, appears in the clouds, and we are caught up to meet Him and be with Him forever - (Matthew 24:27-31). Immediately following the Rapture, God begins the Day of the

Lord's wrath on those who remain, and as Daniel says in 12:2, they experience "**disgrace and everlasting contempt.**"



The order of events isn't spelled out in text-book fashion so students have to form a framework by deduction and logic as they study scripture. That would be too easy for God to do, especially since Satan would also know the entire plan. It is my educated opinion that God chose to hide the Master Plan of Redemption from Satan but still needed to inform believers in such a way so as not to tip His Hand!

Many believe that Satan did not know what exactly he was doing. He was the one (through the religious leaders, Pontius Pilot, and the crowds) who brought Jesus to the cross. Had he known what the consequences of his actions were, he would have not done this. Instead, Satan thought that he had actually defeated God.

The Bible supports a Pre-Tribulation Rapture view of the End Times. From patterns and types in the Old Testament (Noah, Lot, the Israelites in Goshen, Daniel being raised to a higher-position and avoiding the fiery furnace, and a few others), to major key passages in the New Testament, the Bible supports a Pre-Tribulation Rapture from cover to cover.

For example: We are "**not appointed to wrath**" -(1st Thessalonians 5:9); In Revelation, the church is absent from all of the tribulation chapters; The consistent picture of end-time events is that of Christ coming to get His Bride for marriage (not to take her through additional suffering). Also, there is strong Scriptural and linguistic support to demonstrate that the falling away (literally, the departing or departure) spoken of in 2nd Thessalonians 2:3 is a reference to the Rapture — meaning the rapture must come before that day (the Day of the Lord/Tribulation) comes.

The key Rapture passages (1st Thessalonians 4:16-17, 1st Corinthians 15:51-53, John 14:1-4) — as understood in the context of the Pre-Tribulation view — paint the picture of Jesus entering earth's realm, raising and catching away all Christians who died before

the Rapture, then immediately catching away all living believers to meet the Lord in the air as well. Then He will take us all to heaven, hiding us and protecting us from the horrific events of the tribulation period on planet Earth.

Here's what I'm leading up to. We know Paul revealed this mystery to the church in the New Testament — himself prematurely Raptured to see it first hand -(2nd Corinthians 12:2-4, 1st Corinthians 15:8). We also know that many mysteries revealed in the New Testament were concealed in the Old Testament. ***“The new is in the old concealed; the old is in the new revealed.”*** Saint Augustine expressed the remarkable way in which the two testaments of the Bible are so closely interrelated with each other.

With new insights, we look back to the writings of the Old Testament and find that it was there all along. We just couldn't see it without the full revelation of the mystery at hand.

Scripture can have an immediate application and a deeper, prophetic application. Scripture also informs us that even the tiniest stroke or letter found in the Bible was supernaturally inspired by God -(Matthew 5:18).

In 2nd Peter, we learn that no prophecy in Scripture has a private or secret interpretation. Prophecy can only be understood by comparing Scripture with Scripture - (2nd Peter 1:20). It requires the whole counsel of God's Word!

With those thoughts in mind, I pose this question: Are there any specific verses in the Old Testament that reference the Rapture? I believe there are many. In “Diamond and Nugget #1” I briefly mentioned Saint Augustine's drift from Millennialism or what we know as Dispensationalism today. ***“The new is in the old concealed; the old is in the new revealed.”*** This famous statement by Saint Augustine expresses the remarkable way in which the two testaments of the Bible are so closely interrelated with each other.

In his book 12 (30.41–32.43) of the ‘*Confessions*’, Augustine reveals at least five motives operating behind his interpretation of the Old Testament:

1. To grasp the light of truth
2. To foster love for God, the fount of truth
3. To render spiritual profit to his readers
4. To enable others to feed on God
5. To be preserved from error

Thus he allegorizes intermittently and judiciously, to bring these stories under the auspices of his intention, which is ultimately pastoral and theological.

As in a marriage, the man and woman become one flesh, so the Old and New Testaments are married as one book. Their unity cannot be put asunder or put in opposition to one another. They are “one flesh,” one book, one proclamation that's all about Jesus. Each page, each story, from Genesis 1 to Malachi 4, is like a jewel or

precious stone. All together they form the mosaic of the Messiah, Who He is, what He's done for us; And our hope and salvation and life in Him. An Asbury Seminary chapel speaker once said, *"Do you want to know Jesus more? Read the Old Testament."*



In Colossians 2:16-17, the Apostle Paul used the word “shadow” to remind us to the fact that the image cast by an object and representing the form of that object; a sketch or outline. When the light is behind a person who is walking, a shadow is cast ahead of him. That shadow bears a general resemblance to the person who creates it.

As we probe the depths of Scripture, we begin to discover how Jesus Christ used Typological language to bring alive His teachings and allusions through pictorial images. In my ongoing studies, I occasionally run across a missed or overlooked word picture that elucidates a “Diamond” or “Nugget”. Although we focus on a handful of specific core passages related to the Rapture, I know of well over 300 examples which scream out the teaching message of a Pre-Tribulation Rapture. Next time we peel back the onion and feast upon manna from heaven!

Blessings abound in the Mighty Name of Jesus Christ,

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