

24 Reasons Why Matthew 24 Does Not Refer to the Rapture

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Over the years I have correspond with God's people about Matthew 24. Many have been taught that Matthew 24 must refer to the Rapture of the church because of the statements of specific people being raptured or taken away and other people being left behind. They assume that there can be no other understanding or explanation of various texts found in Matthew 24 since they sound like the teaching of the Rapture. So, as a result, Matthew 24 has been viewed in part or in its entirety as the same event of the Rapture. However, a careful contextual reading and study of this chapter of Scripture, when compared with Rapture teaching, would nullify that Matthew 24 is referencing the Rapture of the Church.

There are 24 reasons why Matthew 24 does NOT refer to the Rapture.

#1

- Because the Church did not come into existence until Acts 2 as confirmed by Peter (Acts 11:15-16). Therefore, the specific details about the Rapture of the Church and other related church truth were not revealed until the later church epistles were written (1 Thess. 4:13-18). Forcing the details of the existence of the Church and event of the Rapture into Matthew 24 is unwise for it was not yet taught and understood by the disciples.

Dr. Gaebelein states:

“It is impossible to find a place for the Church in this prophecy.”

It's clear that Matthew 24 precedes Paul's *mystery* revelation of the Rapture (1 Cor. 15:51-52) and the *mystery* teaching about the Church (Eph. 5:32) and therefore could not be speaking about the event of the Rapture of the Church. Neither the Church or the Rapture can be found in Matthew 24 for the revelation and details were not yet given regarding Christ's mystery return and people (the Body of Christ or Church). The teaching about the Church was primarily a Pauline revelation that would be revealed and highlighted later in the epistles. The Rapture was definitely

not a revelation that was given to Matthew and Christ's disciples in the Olive Discourse (Matt. 24-25). They never heard of the Rapture and Christ would have no reason to introduce the Rapture to His followers since they were looking at events that would transpire during the Tribulation Period and the end of the age.

#2

- Because the gospel records are primarily written from the perspective of Second Coming and Kingdom eschatology (Matthew 3:2; 4:17; 5:3-20; 6:10; 7:21; 8:11; 10:7; 18:23-35; 19:14, 23, 28; 20:1-16; 21:43; Mark 1:14-15; Luke 22:30; 23:42; John 3:3, 5) which was based on Old Testament revelation and the promise given to the Jewish people (Acts 1:6).

Matthew 3:1-2

"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Matthew 4:17

"From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Matthew 6:33

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

Matthew 8:11-12

"And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Luke 22:30

"That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Luke 23:42

“And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.”

John 3:3

“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

The first and only hint that Jesus gave to His disciples about the Rapture was in John 14:1-3 and this teaching would be reconfirmed and significantly highlighted in the later writings of the epistles. Jesus would return *for* His Church Age Saints (1 Thess. 4:13-18; 5:9-10; 2 Thess. 2:1; Phil. 3:20), transporting and relocating them to Heaven, before He returns to earth *with* His saints (2 Thess. 1:7-10; Rev. 19:11-16; 1 Cor. 6:1-2). The Gospel records overwhelmingly give a Second Coming/Kingdom eschatological perspective – not a Rapture perspective. Therefore, it would be out of place in the scheme of prophetic revelation to interpret Matthew 24 as the Rapture. Putting the Rapture in Matthew 24 (Kingdom Theology) is like trying to put a square peg in a round hole. It does not fit.

#3

- Because the overall emphasis of the book of Matthew is about “thy kingdom come” (Matt. 6:10) - not thy Rapture come!

The coming earthly kingdom is inaugurated at the Second Coming – not the Rapture. The kingdom parables and Matthew 24 do not teach that the kingdom is a present-day occurrence that is being fulfilled as a spiritual kingdom of Christ ruling in the hearts of His people (Amillennial Theology) or the advancement of His kingdom priorities and will on earth today (Dominion Theology), but that it’s a specific theocratic rule of Jesus Christ Himself that will occur at the end of the pre-Messianic Age (Matt. 13:39, 41-49; 24:3). Therefore, the book of Matthew, including Matthew 24, is focusing on Christ’s Second Coming and the future kingdom rule of Jesus Christ over the earth – not the Rapture of God’s saints into Heaven. Peter, James, and John were given a sneak preview of the Second Coming on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:1-2) – not the Rapture.

- Because, as previously mentioned, Jesus was specifically presenting the Messianic Kingdom to His Jewish people in the book of Matthew (Matt. 3:2; 4:17; 5:3, 5, 10, 19-20; 6:10, 33; 7:21; 8:11; 12:28; 19:24; 21:31, 43) which is the prophetic event that FOLLOWS the Second Coming (Rev. 19-20) – not the Rapture.

The “kingdom of heaven” does not mean that it is *in* Heaven but *of* Heaven (Heaven’s rule over the earth – Matt. 6:10) and is a similar expression to the “kingdom of God” (God’s rule over the earth). These two terms are interchangeable phrases referring to the earthly Messianic Kingdom (Matt. 19:23-24; Matt. 3:2; Mark 1:15; Matt. 5:3; Luke 6:20). They are not associated with the event of the Rapture.

Matthew 19:28

“And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration (*a social, political, and environmental rebirth of the earth*) when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory (*in Jerusalem – Luke 1:32-33*), ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (*during the Millennium*).

This is not the Rapture! It is the Revelation of Christ in His Second Coming to rule over the earth. In the Olivet Discourse there is nothing revealed about the Church or the Rapture. The message only concerns Israel (Matt. 24:1-25:30) and the Gentiles (Matt. 25:31-46) who are living during the “end of the age” (the seven-year Tribulation Period) and the events that transpire at the Second Coming of Christ to earth. It can be readily discerned that Matthew 13, 24-25, and other prophetic texts and chapters within the book of Matthew deal exclusively with the Tribulation Period and those Jews and Gentiles who enter the earthly theocracy at the Second Coming. Attempting to find Church theology and Rapture eschatology in Matthew 24 is like trying to find a needle in a haystack!

#5

- Because Matthew 24 and 25 (the Olivet Discourse) are linked together in their timing and teaching regarding the earthly kingdom. They give a united picture and testimony of Christ's Second Coming to establish the Millennium.

Matthew 25:31-34

“When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory (*the description of the Second Coming*): And before him shall be gathered all nations (*Gentile nations*): and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand (*the saved*), but the goats on the left (*the unsaved*). Then shall the King (*Jesus Christ*) say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom (*the earthly Messianic Kingdom or Millennium*) prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

The judgment of the living or surviving nations of the Tribulation Period and Kingdom entrance into the Millennium is associated with the Second Coming (Matt. 7:13-14; 25:10) – not the Rapture. Both chapters in the Olivet Discourse describe the events associated with the Second Coming in relation to Israel and Gentiles living on earth during the period known as the end of the age (Matt. 24:27-51; 25). The timing and events of these chapters have nothing to do with the timing, teaching and events associated with the Rapture.

#6

- Because in the event of the Rapture Church Age saints will be transported back to Heaven (the Father's House). They will not immediately rule with Messiah over the earth as prophesied in Matthew 24-25 and other related kingdom contexts (Matt. 13:41).

Jesus gave a wonderful sneak preview of the Rapture in John 14:1-3:

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you (*a place in the heavenly city*). And if I go and prepare a place for you,

I will come again (*in the event of the Rapture*), and receive you unto myself; that where I am (*Heaven*), there ye may be also.”

The promise of the Rapture results in God’s saints entering their heavenly home while the event of the Second Coming results in God’s Tribulation saints (Jewish and Gentile) entering the earthly kingdom (Matt. 8:11; 13:43; 25:34) which is clearly depicted in the teachings of Matthew 24-25. Furthermore, in the Rapture God’s Church Age saints are going *up* to Heaven (1 Thess. 4:17-18) but in the Second Coming this same class of saints are seen coming *down* to earth to reign with Christ (Rev. 5:10; 19:14). To mix the *mystery* coming (1 Cor. 15:51-52) of the Rapture with the Second Coming (Matthew 24-25) causes eschatological confusion.

#7

- Because Jesus sitting on the Mount of Olives was synonymous with His Second Coming and the end of the age before His messianic rule over planet earth – not the Rapture.

Matthew 24:3

“And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? (*the destruction of the temple*) and what *shall be* the sign of thy coming (*Second Coming*), and of the end of the world (*age*)?”

Jesus taught that in relation to the entire history of the “times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24) the temple and city of Jerusalem would be destroyed. It would happen in the AD 70 Roman judgment (Luke 21:5) but also reoccur in the future Tribulation Period when Jerusalem will be destroyed under the armies of Antichrist (Zech. 14:1-2). Then, at the end of the age before Messiah reigns, Christ will return in His Second Coming and stand upon the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:3-4). Since this is biblically accurate, how can Jesus be referring to the Rapture in Matthew 24?

#8

- Because the Rapture does not occur at the end of the age before Messiah rules (Matt. 24:3); however, the Second Coming does take place just prior to Christ's rule (Dan. 2:44; 7:22, 27; Rev. 19-20) and it will usher in His earthly reign (the Millennial Kingdom).

It should be noted that none of the questions the disciples asked are in the context of the Church or Church Age in which we live today. The disciples question about "the end of the age" and of Christ's coming (Matt. 24:3) is related to the prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27 (the Tribulation Period, Antichrist, and Second Coming). The terms that are used such as "the beginning of sorrows" (Matt. 24:8), "he that shall endure unto the end" (Matt. 24:13), "the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet (Matt. 24:15), "great tribulation" (Matt. 24:21) and "immediately after the tribulation of those days (Matt. 24:31) indicate that the time reference is the seven years and the Second Coming. The entire context of Matthew 24 has nothing to do with the Rapture of the Church.

The understanding Jesus was giving of the "end of the age" was prophetic and in the distant future (the seven-year Tribulation Period) when the Jews would experience persecution at the hands of the Antichrist, prior to the Second Coming of Christ to earth, which will result in the overthrowing of Israel's enemies and the establishment of His earthly kingdom. It would be during this specific era of time (the end of the age or End Time events of the Tribulation Period) that the Jewish people would witness the signs of the times in relation to Messiah's Second Coming and then be delivered at Messiah's return, entering the Millennial Kingdom.

#9

- Because the Jewish disciples understood that "the promise of your coming" (Matt. 24:3) as referring to His Second Coming to earth in the triumph of the Messiah over His enemies. In fact, they expected it to occur in their own day and time, but Jesus taught that the "end of the age" and His Second Coming would occur in the distant future.

The only “age” the disciples knew about was what He taught them in the parables of Matthew 13 which referenced the age prior to Messiah’s rule over the earth (Matt. 13:39-40, 49). The “age” would extend from the pre-cross ministry of Christ and would end with the coming of Christ with His holy angels to remove the wicked and begin the Messianic Kingdom.

Luke 19:11 reveals that the disciples were looking for the Second Coming to occur and the earthly kingdom to be established: “And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.”

Acts 1:6

“When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?”

The disciples at this point (Matthew 24) were not yet introduced to Rapture teaching (John 14:1-3) and knew only of Christ’s Second Coming. It would be several days after the Olivet Discourse that they would be introduced to Rapture teaching in the Upper Room Discourse (John 14-17). And even then, they did not fully comprehend what Jesus was teaching for even at a much later date they were still thinking of an Israelitish kingdom (Acts 1:6). Therefore, any teaching Christ would later give them in John 14 would not have entered the disciples thinking regarding His teaching in Matthew 24 and the end of the age. Their teaching and understanding in Matthew 24 was that Jesus was going to return in His Second Coming and the “pre-Messianic Age” and harvest (Matt. 13:36-42) would end with the reign of the Messiah. No Rapture teaching can be found in Matthew 24. It was not in the disciple’s prophetic perspective or eschatological understanding. It was not the Jewish way of thinking regarding Messiah’s return and rule.

#10

- Because Jesus prophetically foretells the events that must transpire on earth during the seven-year Tribulation Period. These events occur *after* the Rapture and *before* the Second Coming. Therefore, the Rapture cannot be what Jesus is referring to in Matthew 24 when He speaks of His coming.

Matthew 24:4-12

“And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you (*the Jewish disciples*). For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ (*Messiah*); and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these *are the beginning of sorrows* (*the beginning of birth pangs during the first three-and one-half years of the Tribulation Period*). Then shall they deliver you (*the Jewish people*) up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.”

The Church is already raptured before these and other events that Jesus foretold would come upon earth (1 Thess. 1:10; 5:1-11; Rev. 3:10). Therefore, the Rapture cannot be in the mind of Jesus in the Olivet Discourse.

#11

- Because New Testament Christians do not physically endure and wait to the end of the Tribulation Period to be preserved for entrance into the earthly kingdom at the event of the Rapture; however, Tribulation saints will be preserved to enter the Millennium at the Second Coming.

Matthew 24:13

“But he (*the saved Jew in contrast to the deceived and unregenerate – vv. 10-12*) that shall endure unto the end (*not spiritually endure but physical endure the persecution of the Antichrist up to the end of the Tribulation and period of time prior to His Second Coming, as confirmed in verse 22*), the same shall be saved” (*the saved Jew will be physically delivered to enter and populate the Millennium*).

This is not referring to spiritual but physical deliverance (the deliverance of mortal bodies) of those Jews who have already trusted in the Savior (Christ) during the seven-year Tribulation and period of time that precedes His Second Advent. In the

providence of God, some Jewish tribulation saints will be saved (delivered) from death and survive these terrible years of persecution (Jer. 30:7; Dan. 12:1). As a result, they will enter the earthly kingdom in their mortal/physical bodies and begin to populate the Millennium. All of this leads to the conclusion that the Rapture is not in view in Matthew 24.

This language of enduring to the end, surviving seven years of Tribulation judgment, or being physically saved or delivered to enter the Millennium is not conducive to the teaching of the Rapture. These events will not transpire in conjunction with the Rapture. As Church Age saints, we look for the Savior to deliver us *from* (not through) the Tribulation Period for Christ promised that He will “keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth” (Rev. 3:10). This deliverance will occur in the imminent event of the Rapture (Phil. 3:20-21). The Rapture hope is not to endure physically, or to survive the Tribulation Period and enter the Millennial Kingdom in our same physical bodies. Instead, the blessed hope of the Church is to look for the any moment return of Christ which will result in the Church’s immediate bodily transformation (1 Cor. 15:51-57) and removal from earth, transporting them back to the heavenly city and the place He has prepared for them (John 14:1-3).

#12

- Because the Gospel of the Kingdom is not being preached in the world today since the establishment of the earthly kingdom is not the next event that is going to occur on God’s prophetic calendar.

Matthew 24:14

“And this gospel of the kingdom (*the need for repentance and salvation in view of the coming earthly kingdom*) **shall be preached in all the world** (*universally*) **for a witness** (*of God’s impending judgment and rule over planet earth*) **unto all nations** (*a worldwide proclamation among all humanity*); **and then shall the end come”** (*the end of the Tribulation Period and pre-Messianic Age with the Second Coming – Matt. 24:3*).

The message of the Gospel (good news) of the Kingdom (that the kingdom is coming to earth) is preached *after* the Rapture, during the Tribulation Period, just prior to the Second Coming and establishment of the earthly kingdom. Since this is true, Jesus could not have the Rapture in view in Matthew 24 but His Second coming to earth. The Rapture of the Church into Heaven (not the Second Coming and beginning of God's earthly kingdom) is the next event that will occur on God's prophetic calendar. By this time (the Tribulation Period) the Rapture has already occurred and the saints are in Heaven (John 14:1-3; Rev. 3:10).

#13

- Because the Gospel we are declaring today does not have to be preached throughout the entire earth before the Rapture can happen.

Once again, Jesus declared in Matthew 24:14: “**And this gospel of the kingdom** (*the heralding message of repentance and spiritual preparation for the arrival of the earthly kingdom*) **shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations** (*a condition for the Second Coming to occur*); **and then shall the end come**” (the end of the age prior to Messiah's rule).

During the Tribulation Period, God will have servants who will witness and spread the good news concerning Messiah's salvation and His soon-coming kingdom. This message (the King is coming – the Kingdom is at hand) will be similar to what was preached by John the Baptist, Jesus, and the disciples at the beginning of Matthew's gospel (Matt. 3:2; 4:17; see also John 1:29, 36). During the seven-year Tribulation Period the message will be preached universally by the 144,000 Jewish evangelists (Rev. 14:4) and a heralding angel (Rev. 14:6) stressing the good news of Christ's (Messiah's) salvation in view of the Second Coming judgment and the establishment of the earthly kingdom. Apparently, many will respond to this message (Rev. 7:9–14).

Here is the point. The coming of Jesus in the Rapture for His Church does not have any conditions attached to it. It is not based on other events that **MUST** happen or transpire (like preaching the Gospel worldwide) before Jesus can return for His Church Age saints. In other words, there is no place in the Bible that says the event

of the Rapture is conditioned upon the Gospel of God's grace (Paul's specific message) being preached throughout the entire earth.

I once heard a well-meaning missionary say that the Gospel must be preached in every nook and cranny of the earth before Jesus can return for His children in the Rapture. This is not true. In Matthew 24:14, Jesus was referring to the Gospel of the Kingdom which will be a message proclaimed of salvation from judgment in view of the impending earthly kingdom, a message that will be preached throughout the seven years of the Tribulation Period. The Rapture is a *signless* event which means there are no conditions attached to it. Nothing needs to happen before Jesus can return in the Rapture. This is because the Rapture is an imminent event which could happen at any moment (1 Cor. 16:22; Rom. 13:11; Phil. 3:20-21).

#14

- Because Daniel's prophecy of the abomination of desolation (Dan. 11:31; 12:11) mentioned in Matthew 24:15 occurs during the second half of the Tribulation Period and precedes the Second Coming – not the Rapture.

Matthew 24:15

“When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:).”

The Church will not be living during the Tribulation Period and witness this detestable act when the Antichrist places a statue of himself in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem (Rev. 13:15; 14:11; 15:2). Furthermore, why would Daniel inject the teaching of the Rapture into Matthew 24, since this wicked event that mocks the Jewish worship of God will occur prior to the Second Coming and not the Rapture of the Church?

The event foreshadowed here can only occur before Christ's Second Coming – not the Rapture. If this event cannot transpire before the Rapture, then why would Jesus be referring to the Rapture in Matthew 24? Daniel's prophecy about the abomination of desolation (Antichrist's statue within the rebuilt Jewish temple) has

nothing to do with the present Church Age and New Testament saints, but with the time frame of Daniel's 70th week (Dan. 9:27) - the seven-year Tribulation Period and Daniel's people ("seventy weeks are determined upon thy people" – Dan. 9:24). The final week of Daniel's prophecy (the seven-year Tribulation Period) and the reign of Antichrist is not determined to fall upon the Church (1 Thess. 1:10). These unmistakable prophetic observations would exclude Matthew 24 as being a Rapture passage.

#15

- Because Jesus was specifically speaking about the Jewish people who would be living during the future Tribulation Period that suffer at the hands of the Antichrist. He references his Jewish "disciples" (Matt. 24:1) and follows through with personal pronouns that relate to the Jewish people and gives examples of Jewish persecution (Matt. 24:1, 4, 9, 13, 15-25, 34).

Matthew 24:16-21

"Then let them (*the Jewish people*) which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight (*the Jews*) be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day (*the Jewish sabbath*): For then shall be great tribulation (*the second half of the Tribulation Period*), such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."

The context of the Second Coming focuses on delivering the persecuted Jewish people – not rescuing the Church from the hands of the Antichrist. Since this is true, then how could Jesus be referring to the Rapture of New Testament saints in this chapter? The Church is not mentioned in Matthew 24, and neither is the Rapture because the Church will not experience the wrath of the Tribulation Period (1 Thess. 5:1-3). The Church is looking for Christ – not the Antichrist ("looking for that blessed hope" - Titus 2:13). Matthew 24 is a Jewish and Tribulation context that has nothing to do with Church truth or the experience of Church saints.

#16

- Because the birth pangs of the Tribulation Period (“the beginning of sorrows” Matt. 24:8) and the “great tribulation” (Matt. 24:21 – the second half of the Tribulation Period) refers to the specific time period that occurs after the Rapture but precedes the Second Coming.

Matthew 24:21-22

“For then (not now) shall be great tribulation (strong birth pangs during the last three-and one-half years of the Tribulation Period), such as was not (unequaled) since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be (Jer. 30:7). And except those days should be shortened (according to God’s sovereign and eternal counsel), there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake (Israel) those days shall be shortened” (be terminated in seven years).

According to God’s prophetic calendar these terrible events are not prophesied to occur *before* the Rapture but *after* the event of the Rapture has already occurred. They are prophetic events that transpire on earth before the Second Coming. Since this is true, how can the Rapture be in Christ’s thinking in Matthew 24? Furthermore, nowhere in the instruction of the epistles, which present Rapture teaching, do we see the need to shorten the days of God’s judgments to save His people (the Church) from being eradicated off the face of the earth! Again, these are events that will occur just prior to the Second Coming, specifically during the last half of Daniel’s 70th week, and therefore have no relationship to the occurrence of the Rapture.

#17

- Because the Jewish people are warned of the deception of false Christ’s that will try and convince them that the Messiah has already returned in His Second Coming and was already living on earth.

Matthew 24:23-26

“Then (looking back to the great tribulation and events that occur during the second half and toward the close of the Tribulation Period – vs. 21) if any man shall say

unto you (*Christ's Jewish brethren*), Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe *it* not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect (*those Jews redeemed in the Tribulation and who will enter the earthly kingdom – vs. 31*). Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, *he is* in the secret chambers; believe *it* not.”

During the End Times (second half of the Tribulation Period) reports will circulate that the Messiah has already returned and is performing miracles in secluded and secret places. But this cannot be the case since the return of Jesus in His Second Coming will be a worldwide spectacular event (Matt. 24:30). The persecuted Jews are warned about the deception regarding Christ's Second Coming – not the Rapture. Once again, these statements clearly reveal that the Second Coming is in Christ's view and perspective – not the Rapture.

#18

- Because Jesus said He is going to return *after* the Tribulation Period which means that He cannot be speaking about the Rapture of the Church.

Matthew 24:29

“Immediately after the tribulation of those days (*the official ending of the seven years*) shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven (*meteorite showers*), and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken” (*a collective reference to the heavenly bodies such as the sun, moon, and stars reeling back and forth – Joel 2:31; 3:15-16*).

The stated fact that Christ returns “after the tribulation of those days” (the Tribulation Period) is a clear marker that the Second Coming is in view and not the Rapture. This is because the Rapture is not a post-tribulation but pre-tribulation event (1 Thess. 1:10; 5:1-11; Rev. 3:10). The Church cannot be raptured following the events of the Tribulation Period because it has been already raptured prior to the commencement of the Tribulation Period. Unless one espouses an incorrect

post-tribulation view of the Rapture, Jesus could not be referencing the Rapture of the Church in the Olivet Discourse.

#19

- Because the mention of the coming of the Son of Man in Matthew 24 is associated with a series of climactic events that are strictly linked to Christ's Second Coming. The spectacular and universal scope of these events that take place on earth and in the heavens are never mentioned as occurring in conjunction with the Rapture.

Matthew 24:27-30

“For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be (*the brilliance of Christ's Shekinah Glory will be seen on a worldwide scale*). **For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles (vultures) be gathered together** (*a scene of death and judgment – Rev. 19:17-18, 21*). **Immediately after the tribulation of those days** (*the 75-day gap begins immediately after the end of the Tribulation Period which will result in various events occurring on earth prior to the Second Coming – Daniel 12:11-13*) **shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light** (*cosmic disturbances and signs that will last an undetermined amount of time – Joel 2:31*). **And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven** (*the Shekinah cloud of Christ's glory – Dan. 7:13*): **and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn** (*some in repentance but many in fear – Zech. 12:12*), **and they shall see** (*universally around the world – Rev. 1:7*) **the Son of man coming in the clouds** (*clouds through which Christ's deity are displayed*) **of heaven with power (might, strength, force) and great glory** (*the radiant light, brilliance, splendor of Christ's majestic power*), **and the stars shall fall from heaven** (*meteorite showers accompany Christ's Second Advent*), **and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken** (*the shaking of the celestial planets and stars*). **And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect** (*saved Israel as in verse 24*) **from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other”** (*the worldwide regathering of saved Israel which will be a prolonged effort and event - Duet. 30:4-5; Isa. 11:12, 15-16; 51:11; 43:5-7; Isa. 27:13; 60:8-10; Jer. 31:7-9; Ezek. 11:16-17; 20:41-42; 36:24-27*).

The shining and spectacular return of Christ in His Second Coming will be visually seen by everyone living on earth (“and they shall see”), but this will not be true of

the Rapture, since it is a secret or private return for only His children (1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-52; John 14:1-3; 2 Thess. 2:1; 1 John 3:2; Phil. 3:20-21). Christ's Second Coming will also be accompanied by death on a massive scale as evident by the carrion birds (a sign of judgment that will accompany Christ's Second Advent).

Revelation 19:21

"And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which *sword* proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."

Another indication that Matthew 24 is referencing the Second Coming is the astronomical signs that also precede His return. None of these signs are ever mentioned in Rapture passages but are always identified with the Old Testament apocalyptic imagery of the Second Coming.

Joel 2:31

"The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come" (*before the Second Coming occurs*).

In the Second Coming the Son of Man is pictured as coming on the clouds in fulfillment of the Old Testament imagery of Christ's Second Coming (Daniel 7:13-14). This alone argues against Matthew 24 as referencing the Rapture since the truth about the Rapture was never revealed in the Old Testament (1 Cor. 15:51). The clouds that accompany Christ are clouds of glory through which God's radiant light and deity are manifested. Matthew 25:31 says this is the time "When the Son of man shall come in his glory..."

Interestingly, clouds seem to be linked to the glorious presence and display of light that Jesus Christ will reveal at His Second Coming for He is said to return with the "clouds of heaven" and "great glory" (Matt. 24:30) which means His glory will shine and display itself through the accompanying clouds. The two are linked together and will no doubt be seen in some spectacular display of divine majesty and deity that will be witnessed on a universal scale. This type of universal display of Christ's deity is never mentioned in any Rapture passages. In other words, Jesus is not going to reveal His glory on a worldwide scale at the Rapture.

There will also be specific cosmic disturbances (“the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light”), meteorite showers (“the stars shall fall from heaven”), and a heavenly earthquake impacting the luminaries (“the heavens shall be shaken”) that will occur in conjunction with Christ’s Second Advent. In addition, an angelic army will gather God’s elect which in this Second Coming context refers to saved Israel (“Israel mine elect” – Isa. 45:4).

Jesus taught earlier in Matthew 13:41:

“The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom (*at its inception or establishment*) all things that offend, and them which do iniquity.”

Angels will have an important role in the Second Coming by separating the saved from the unsaved and regathering saved Israel into her homeland (Matt. 13:30, 37-43; 25:31; 2 Thess. 1:7; Jude 14; Ezek. 11:16-17; 36:24-27). Christ had been addressing His disciples or followers and predicted a time when the Jewish people would be regathered by angels to enter the Messianic Kingdom at the end of the present age (Matt. 24:3). Of course, none of these events occur at the Rapture. There is not one Rapture passage found in Scripture where Christ is seen to return in a universal display of brilliance, where every eye will see him (Rev. 1:7), with accompanying cosmic signs, meteorite showers, the shaking of the luminaries, with death following Him on a massive scale, and with angels gathering His beloved Jewish people to enter the land of Israel for the commencement of the Millennial Kingdom (Rev. 20:1-3). This is not the Rapture of God’s saints into their heavenly home (John 14:1-3; 1 Thess. 4:17-18) but the Revelation of Jesus Christ in His Second Coming to planet earth.

#20

- Because signs are for Israel - not the Church. Matthew 24 reveals that the Jewish remnant living during the Tribulation Period will see the sign of Messiah’s Shekinah Glory in His radiant and resplendent return in great power (Matt. 24:3, 30) and they will also witness the signs leading up to His Second Coming.

Matthew 24:32-35

“Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye (*the Jews living during the Tribulation Period*) shall see all these things (*the previous signs mentioned in verses 4-31*), know that it is near (*the Second Coming of Christ to earth*), **even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation (*the generation of Jews living during the Tribulation Period*) **shall not pass** (*pass out of existence – a promise that a remnant of Jews will miraculously survive the seven-year Tribulation Period*), **till all these things be fulfilled**” (*all the signs related to Christ’s Second Coming and His actual Second Advent to earth*). **Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away**” (*what Jesus says about His Second Coming will happen and cannot be overturned – Matt. 5:18*).**

Jesus taught that there will be a generation of Jews that will be living at the time these signs begin to take place and they will live through this specific period (Tribulation Period) and will see the Lord Jesus coming as the King of glory.

Jesus said in Matthew 23:39:

“For I say unto you (*a remnant of Jews who express faith in the Messiah at the Second Coming*), **Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say** (*acknowledged in repentance and faith*), **Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.**”

In summary, two-thirds of the Jews “in all the land” (Zech. 13:8-9) will be cut off but one third is rescued in conjunction with the Second Coming and officially offered the cleansing of salvation and their covenant promises (Zech. 12:10-13:1). This will be a day of great Jewish mourning or weeping in the land of Palestine. In fact, many of the Jewish people from all over the earth, including the remnant in Palestine (Zech. 13:8-9), will mourn or wail (Matt. 24:30; Rev. 1:7), as they see the Messiah returning in His brightness, splendor, and radiance and they will receive Him as their Messiah and Savior. It’s these born-again Jews that will enter the earthly theocracy (the Millennium) which Jesus is about to establish over the earth. They are termed as the “elect” or saved Israel who enter the Millennial Kingdom (Matt. 24:31).

Its very clear that the specific stratospheric and stellar signs that lead up to and accompany Christ’s return to earth can only occur in conjunction with the Second Coming – not the Rapture. No Scripture gives any hint of such signs occurring prior

to the Rapture of the Church. In fact, the Rapture is revealed in Scripture as an imminent event (1 Cor. 16:22; James 5:8; Rev. 22:20) with no specific signs that must be fulfilled before it happens. However, the Second Coming is viewed as an event that is preceded with specific signs that must be fulfilled before the event can occur. The careful interpreter of Scripture should never mix the Rapture with the Revelation of Jesus Christ (Second Coming) for they are separate events with two different destinations (Heaven versus earth - John 14:1-3; Matt. 19:28; Luke 1:33), with different outcomes, different purposes, and include different classes of people (Church Age Saints versus Tribulation saints). Today we should not be looking for *signs* to be fulfilled before the Rapture can occur but be looking for the *Savior* Himself to return at any moment in the Rapture (Phil. 3:20) and transport His beloved Church back to Heaven – not keep them on earth.

#21

- Because Jesus was in the context of Matthew 24 referring to the specific day of His return to earth in His Second Coming – not the Rapture.

Jesus taught in Matthew 24:36:

“But of that day and hour (of His Second Coming to earth) knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.”

By what was previously revealed, “that day and hour” which Jesus spoke about could not be referring to the day of the Rapture, but the day that begins the event of His Second Coming, which will eventually bring about the demise of the earthly Satanocracy and the establishment of His theocratic rule over the earth (Zech. 14:9; Rev. 20:1-7). Because Jesus will return during the 75-day gap between the ending of the Tribulation Period (Matt. 24:29) and beginning of the Millennium (Daniel 12:11-13) no person will be able to determine the day and hour of His Second Coming. They will be able to see the signs and know the season of His return but not know the exact day and hour of Christ’s return in His Second Advent.

- Because Jesus taught that His Second Coming to earth (not the Rapture) will follow the catastrophic judgment of the Tribulation Period and that the unsaved who survive the Tribulation will be raptured (transported) or taken into judgment (not Heaven).

Matthew 24:37-42

“But as the days of Noe were *(the days on earth prior to the Genesis Flood)*, **so shall also the coming of the Son of man be** *(the Second Coming of Christ to earth)*. **For as in the days that were before the flood** *(the days on earth before the Second Coming will mirror or be similar to the days of Noah before the Genesis Flood)* **they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage** *(going about their daily living and ignoring God)*, **until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away** *(the unsaved people on earth were swept away into the global judgment of the Genesis Flood)*; **so shall also the coming of the Son of man be** *(the same analogy can be applied to Christ’s Second Coming to earth)*. **Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken** *(the unsaved are taken away to judgment as the earth dwellers were judged during Noah’s day)*, **and the other left** *(the saved are left to enter the Millennial Kingdom as Noah and his family were spared to enter the new world that followed the Genesis Flood)*. **Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken** *(the unsaved will be raptured by angelic assistance to the place of judgment – Hades – Matt. 13:41-42, 49-40; 25:31-33, 41)*, **and the other left** *(the saved shall remain on earth to inhabit the earthly kingdom or Millennium – Matt. 13:43; 24:31; 25:31-34)*. **Watch therefore** *(be alert and ready – preparedness is equivalent to salvation)*: **for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come”** *(there is a need to be saved and therefore spiritually prepared to meet the Messiah in His Second Coming, for judgment will come at a time when people least expect it)*.

Although many well-meaning Christians and commentators have applied these specific verses to the Rapture (the saved being raptured to Heaven), we have repeatedly discovered why Matthew 24 cannot be teaching the Rapture. Matthew 24:37-42 is actually teaching a *reversal of the Rapture*. In the blessed hope of the Rapture the *saved* are taken away and transported back to Heaven (John 14:1-3)

but in the Second Coming the *unsaved* are raptured away to a place of judgment which is identified elsewhere as Hades.

Jesus already taught about this judgment in Matthew 13:41-43 and uses the same analogy of the unsaved being rapture or taken away to judgment at His Second Coming: **“The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom (prior to its inception or official establishment) all things that offend, and them which do iniquity (the unsaved will be gathered and taken away to judgment as next explained); And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing (the unsaved will be raptured or transported to Hades which is the place of temporary judgment until the Lake of Fire – Luke 16:23). Then shall the righteous (the saved) shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father (the earthly Messianic Kingdom). Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.”**

Matthew 13:49-50 adds:

“So shall it be at the end of the world (the pre-Messianic Age): the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just (the rapture or taking away of the unsaved), And shall cast them into the furnace of fire (the temporary place of judgment called Hades): there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth” (expressions of pain and anger in the judgment of Hades).

Matthew 25:31-34 reveals the same rapture to judgment analogy:

“When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory (the Second Coming): And before him shall be gathered all nations (“ethnos” = Gentile nations who survive the Tribulation Period in contrast to the previous Jewish severance and judgment of Matthew 24-25:1-30): and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep (the saved) on his right hand, but the goats (the unsaved) on the left. Then shall the King (the returning Messiah) say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom (the promised earthly kingdom) prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

Matthew 25:41 concludes the analogy:

“Then shall he (*the King*) say also unto them on the left hand (*the unsaved*), Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels” (*the severing of the unsaved wicked from the saved, prior to the Millennium, taking away the unsaved into Hades which begins their eternal torment*).

It should be very clear to the Bible interpreter that Jesus was not describing the Rapture in any of these related passages since the removal of the Church will not be a judgment on the Church. In every instance, Jesus taught that in His Second Coming it will be the *unsaved* who are raptured, removed, and who experience His retribution or judgment and it is the *saved* who remain on earth to enter the Millennium.

Feinberg comments on the Matthew 24 Second Coming passage:

“It will be a taking away judicially and in judgment. The ones left will enjoy the blessings of Christ’s reign on earth, just as Noah and his family were left to continue life on earth. This is the opposite of the rapture, where those who are left go into the judgment of the Great Tribulation.”

Arnold Fruchtenbaum, a pretribulation author, claims that Matthew 24:36-42 is reverting back to a description of the Rapture of the Church after correctly observing that the previous section was referring to the events associated with the Second Coming. Astonishingly, he places Matthew 24:36-42 (an alleged Rapture passage) between two passages of Scripture which he correctly observes are dealing with the Tribulation Period and Second Coming. This should cause the interpreter of Scripture to raise a red flag.

Suddenly and unexpectedly, out of the thin air, Fruchtenbaum decides to change what was previously a Second Coming explanation into a new explanation about the Rapture. Despite his feeble attempts to argue for the Rapture in the passage (something the disciples had no knowledge about) and ignoring the clear contextual evidence and flow of the Tribulation Period and Second Coming, he is persistent in his conclusion that only this section of the Olivet Discourse is referring to the Rapture. His claims that the “taking away” in verses 40-41 is different than verse 39 (a different kind of taking away) and that the chronological sequence of

the Olivet Discourse is broken to revert back to the teaching of the Rapture (where does he find the Rapture earlier in Matthew?). His conclusions are weighed and found wanting.

His main conclusion that Matthew 24:36-42 must refer to the Rapture because everyone living on earth could know the exact time when the Second Coming would occur (immediately after the expiration of the seven years) is also incorrect. This is because Jesus will return during the 75-day gap that follows the seven years (Daniel 12:11-13) or at one point “after the tribulation of those days” (Matt. 24:29). People living during this time could know the season of His Second Coming but not the exact day and hour of His return (Matt. 24:32-42).

Jesus speaks of the same matter in Luke 17:32-36:

“Remember Lot’s wife (who was judged by God). Whosoever shall seek to save his life (from the hardship related to discipleship living and therefore give no evidence of one’s salvation) shall lose it (experience Christ’s judgment at His Second Coming); and whosoever shall lose his life (experience hardship as a transformed and true follower of Christ, possibly even dying for Christ’s cause, and therefore giving evidence of regeneration) shall preserve it (shall not experience Christ’s judgment at the Second Coming but be preserved to enter the Millennium in their natural or resurrection bodies – Dan. 12:1-3; Matt. 13:43). I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken (into judgment at the Second Coming, as the unsaved were in the days of Noah), and the other shall be left (to enter the earthly theocracy). Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken (to judgment as the unsaved were judged by the Flood), and the other left (to enter the Millennial Kingdom). Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken (to judgment at Christ’s Second Coming), and the other left (to enter the Messianic Kingdom).”

Dr. Renald Showers comments on the difference between Rapture and Second Coming passages: “Overall, the context of these passages (*John 14:1-3; 1 Thess. 4:13-17*) concerning the Rapture of the church is radically different from the context of Matthew 24:37-44, of the events in the days of Noah to the order of things at His Second Coming.”

Attempting to read the Rapture into these Second Coming texts is to deny the simple logic of what Jesus was teaching in the kingdom parables and Olivet Discourse. Once again, the understanding of the “the coming of the Son of man” throughout the entire book of Matthew is a clear reference to Christ’s Second Coming to earth in order to establish His kingdom (Matt. 16:28; 24:27, 30; 25:31-32, 34; 26:64). It would be strange and meaningless to suddenly shift to the teaching of the epistles and the Rapture of the Church when speaking of one person being taken and another left (Matt. 24:40-31). Again, this is a *reversal of the Rapture* for at the Second Coming the unsaved are raptured or taken way to judgment (Matt. 24:39) but in the prophetic event of the Rapture the saved are taken away to Heaven (John 14:1-3).

The key to remember what is being taught in Matthew 24 are the phrases: “**as the days of Noe were**” (Matt. 24:37) and “**until the flood came, and took them all away**” (Matt. 24:39). During Noah’s day the unsaved people were taken by the flood and experienced God’s judgment. What happened *historically* during the days of the Flood (the unsaved were taken or swept away into judgment and did not enter the post-flood earth) is what will occur *prophetically* at the Second Coming (the unsaved are going to be taken away to judgment and not enter the Millennial Kingdom). This is the clear teaching of this passage and other related passages dealing with the Second Coming. To inject Rapture teaching into Matthew 24 is to ignore the greater and immediate context of what is being taught.

#23

- Because the homeowner parable that Christ gives in Matthew 24, as His previous teachings and statements, relates to the period of time known as the Tribulation Period and His Second Coming to earth.

Matthew 24:43-51

“But know this, that if the goodman (*master or homeowner*) of the house had known in what watch the thief would come (*Christ’s Second Coming comes unexpectedly as a thief for those who are not saved and expecting His return*), he would have watched (*have been saved and spiritually prepared to meet the Messiah*), and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be

ye also ready (*saved and prepared to meet the returning Messiah*): **for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh**" (Christ's Second Coming).

The Bible never teaches that the Rapture will come as a thief in the night to unsaved people living during the days prior to the Rapture. This is because the event of the Rapture has nothing to do with the unsaved but only God's Church Age saints (1 Cor. 15:51-52; 1 Thess. 4:17-18). Contrary to early films created on the subject of the Rapture, Christ will not return as a thief in the event of the Rapture. However, He will return as a thief in the night during His Second Coming to those who are living on earth (following the Tribulation Period) and who are not saved and prepared to meet Him.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-4 also declares that the Tribulation Period will not come upon the Church as a thief in the night. **"But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord** (*the eschatological phrase for the Tribulation Period*) **so cometh as a thief in the night** (*unexpectedly, without warning*). **For when they** (*the unsaved left behind after the Rapture*) **shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child** (*the beginning birth pangs of the Tribulation Period as spoken by Christ – Matt. 24:8*); **and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren** (*the saved - Church Age saints*), **are not in darkness** (*a metaphor of sinful blindness and unbelief*), **that that day** (*the Tribulation Period*) **should overtake you as a thief."**

The prophetic thief imagery of both the Tribulation Period and Second Coming of Christ to earth is never associated with the Rapture and God's New Testament saints. This means that the "thief analogy" in Matthew 24 and other prophetic texts relate to Christ's Second Coming and unsaved people – not the Rapture and God's New Testament saints. The homeowner parable is given in the context of Christ's Second Coming and teaches the need for watchfulness and preparation which in a specific way pertains to salvation and spiritual preparation for His Second Advent to earth.

#24

- Because the closing parable of Matthew 24:45-51 speaks of evil servants being judged at the Second Coming – not the Rapture.

The parables that Jesus taught in Matthew 24 should not be stretched and given meanings outside their intended purpose. We should not commit the error of reading and interjecting the epistles (Church and Rapture truth) back into the parables of Matthew 24. These parables are designed to teach one primary truth. Jesus was teaching in these specific parables the spiritual preparedness of the unsaved (placing faith in the Messiah) before He returns to judge planet earth. The Second Coming parables in Matthew 13, 24, 25 are always portraying the distinction between the saved and unsaved. In a broad stroke of the prophetic brush, Jesus reveals that the wicked will be severed from among the saved and be taken to judgment (hades) awaiting the Great White Throne Judgment. The saved will remain on earth to enter the Millennial Kingdom. The kingdom parables do not teach the preparation of Christians for the Rapture but salvation or judgment in view of the Second Coming.

Mathew 24:45-51

“Who then is a faithful and wise servant (*the saved Jewish person who is alive at the Second Coming*), **whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh** (*the Second Coming*) **shall find so doing** (*the proof of one’s salvation*). **Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods** (*reward and privilege to rule in the Millennial Kingdom - Matt. 25:21, 23*). **But and if that evil servant** (*the unsaved person who has rejected Christ as Savior and manifests unregenerate living*) **shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The lord of that servant shall come** (*the Second Coming*) **in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites** (*the unsaved who claim to be servants*): **there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth**” (*the wailing and grinding of teeth in pain and also anger against Christ when the unsaved are judged in Hades at the Second Coming*)

There are other similar prophetic statements in Matthew's writings and Jesus' statements that relate to this same time of judgment which follows the Second Coming of Christ.

Matthew 8:12

"But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Matthew 13:42

"And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

Matthew 13:50

"And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

Matthew 22:13

"Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Matthew 25:30

"And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Stanley Toussaint comments:

"Invariably throughout Matthew this phrase [weeping and gnashing of teeth] refers to the retribution of those who are judged before the millennial kingdom is established (Matthew 8:12; 13:42, 50; 22:13; 25:30)."

Of course, these descriptions of judgment cannot be related to the Rapture since there is no mention of any judgment upon unsaved sinners in the event of the Rapture. Unsaved people will not be cast into judgment when the Rapture occurs. Paul never mentions this in the writings of the epistles when explaining the events associated with the Rapture of the Church.

In addition, the epistles do not mention that New Testament saints will be allotted rulership privileges in the Millennial Kingdom at the event of the Rapture (“Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods” – Matt. 24:47).

Matthew 25:21 speaks of the same ruling privileges given to the Jews in the Millennium: **“His lord said unto him (the returning King and Messiah), Well done, thou good and faithful servant (the saved Jewish person): thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things (during the earthly kingdom): enter thou into the joy of thy lord” (enjoyment in the earthly theocracy).**

This is repeated in Matthew 25:23:

“His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant (the saved Jew); thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things (privileges of rulership based upon dedication to Christ): enter thou into the joy of thy lord” (the joy of kingdom living during Christ’s Messianic, earthly reign).

In conclusion, the entire context of the book of Matthew and Christ’s comments in Matthew 24, along with the other related parabolic passages of Matthew 13 and Matthew 25, contain a united teaching and witness that the entirety of the Olivet Discourse is dealing with the Tribulation Period and the Second Coming of Christ to planet earth, which occurs after the Tribulation Period.

Do not become lost in the sea of prophetic confusion that surrounds Matthew 24. We should not commit the exegetical error of backreading the epistles and more specifically the Rapture of the Church into Christ’s kingdom parables and His teaching on the Olivet Discourse. To do so creates eschatological confusion between the Rapture of the Church and Revelation of Christ in His Second Coming. It also causes God’s prophetic program to be misrepresented and misapplied when studying Bible prophecy and the teachings that are related to the End Times.

Although there are some different interpretive conclusions on Matthew 24, all Christians who embrace the biblical teaching of the Rapture of the Church should pray together with great longing and expectancy: “Even so, come, Lord Jesus” (Revelation 22:20).