

BUCKLAND ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH
THE RETURN
(1) THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH
REVELATION 4:1-4; 1 THESSALONIANS 4:13-18
Rev Dr Derek Stringer

DOES THE CHURCH GO THROUGH THE TRIBULATION?

Differences between 1 THESSALONIANS 4 and REVELATION 19.

- IN HEAVEN / ON EARTH
- FOR HIS CHURCH / WITH HIS CHURCH
- AS A DELIVERER / AS A WARRIOR
- WITH GRACE / IN WRATH
- AS A BRIDEGROOM / AS KING OF KINGS

There is no biblical basis for combining the RAPTURE with the coming of Christ in JUDGMENT.

THE BIBLE CLEARLY PRESENT TWO STAGES –

- Coming For The CHURCH
- Coming In JUDGMENT.

REVELATION 4:1-4

“Write therefore what you have **seen**, what is **now**, and what will take place **later**.” (Rev.1:19)

REV.1 (Seen) REV.2-3 (Now) REV.4-22 (Later)
A Literal TRIBULATION – WRATH – COMING KINGDOM.

REVELATION 4-5 A PROLOGUE . . . “After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, ‘come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.’” (Rev.4:1)

- **Revelation 4-5 . . . THE SCENE IN HEAVEN.**
- **Revelation 6-19 . . . THE TRIBULATION.**
- **Revelation 20 . . . THE MILLENNIUM.**
- **Revelation 21-22 . . . THE FINAL ETERNAL STATE.**

IT’S SET-UP FROM CH.4-5 WHEN JOHN SEES

- A Temple Throne (*Open Door*)
- A Picture Of God (*Someone Sitting*)
- A Picture Of The Church (*24 Elders*)

“Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones and seated on them were twenty-four elders.”

NOTE - The 24 Elders Are REDEEMED and therefore not angels but PEOPLE.

CONCLUSION?

The church is in heaven (THE PRE-TRIBULATIONIST VIEW)

7 SEALS - "Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals." (Rev. 5:7-8)

REVELATION 6-7 –

The 24 ELDERS watch people coming out of the TRIBULATION.

1 THESSALONIANS 4.

"We do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope." (v.13)

"The dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the lord in the air." (v.16c)

AN EVENT IS COMING IN THE AIR.

"According to the Lord's own words." (v.15)

[Note 1 *Corinthian 15*]

"We who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep." (v.15b)

QUESTION:

Did Paul think that the Rapture was imminent? Yes!

[Note 1 *John 2:28*]

- Explaining his coming 'Kingdom' Jesus gave SIGNS.
- The early church said, "MARANATHA." (1 *Corinthians 16:22*)

[Note 2 *Thessalonians 2:3*]

"That day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed." (ANTICHRIST)

1 *Thessalonians 4:16* – "With a loud command . . . the voice of the archangel . . . and with the trumpet call of God."

"We will not all sleep, but we will be changed – in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet." (1 *Corinthians 15:51-52*)

THE PURPOSE OF EXPLAINING THE RAPTURE . . .

“Therefore encourage each other with these words.” (1 Thess. 4:18)