

Rapture and Tribulation (April 19, 2015 notes)

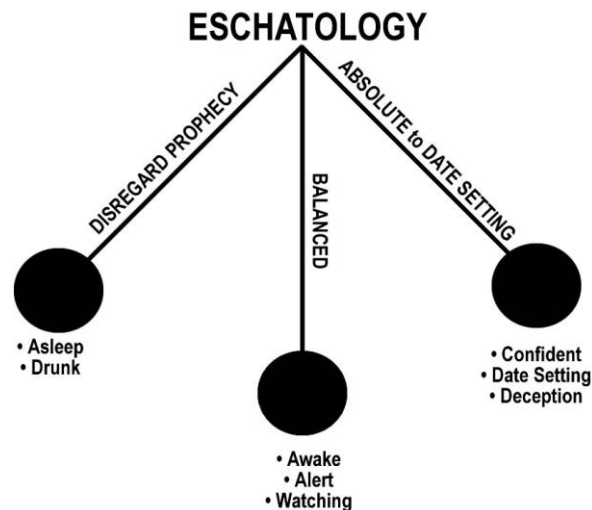
Important Point: There is a difference between:

1. Predicting the future or Date Setting (a form of deception)
2. Asleep (complete disregard for prophecy)
3. Being Awake, Alert, Watching (or, creating potential eschatological models and overlaying them with current events)

The synonym of #1 could be “deception” which results in disillusioned people and deceived people. A believer who has their eschatology set in stone is no longer awake and is no longer watching. A believer who is not comparing their current events with prophecy is not watching and waiting. #1 is the no longer “awake”, “watching”, “alert”, but is instead overconfident and deceived.

Being “asleep” or “drunk” is the polar opposite of #1, because it is complete disregard to prophecy. The opposite personal character of #3 “AWAKE” is “asleep”, in “darkness” or “drunk” on the world. To be “asleep” means you are not even looking and not comparing your eschatological model with historical and current events.

We should watch and be alert, but we know that we do not know the day or the hour.



Comparing Eschatology to Current Events

Believers have always compared current events to potential end times.

- AC is Nero
- AC is any number of Roman Emperors
- AC is Pope
- AC is Napoleon
- AC is Hitler
- AC is Islamic leader

Believers have always interpreted their understanding of eschatology to the current historical setting and made adjustments:

- Eusebius with the rise of Constantine
- Augustine after the rise of Constantine
- Catholic church in the midst of the Holy Roman Empire
- USA in the industrial revolution before WW I

Timing of the Rapture

- Early church does not seem to be looking for a deliverance from the Tribulation or AC.
- Pre-Trib says they can prove that the early church does, but the full context of quotes seems to prove different.
- By 300's rapture, let alone pre-trib rapture was not part of mainline church eschatology
- With the rise of premillennial views 1600-1900's the rapture received more attention
- 1830's in Scotland (and, then Great Britain) a prophecy movement began in a charismatic church belonging to Edward Irving that produced some utterance (Margaret MacDonald, a teenager) that seems to have led into the early rapture teaching that is documented from this area at this time. Darby visited services and immediately began to speak of a pre-trib rapture. Darby took this view to the US and Canada...it caught on at a very unique time in a very narrow part of Christendom in the West...it has since then spread.

POINTS:

- The pretrib rapture did not help deliver;
 - Paul or any of the other apostles
 - Any believer from early Roman persecution
 - Any believer labeled a heretic by the early church 300-600 AD for "mis-teaching" or holding to "false views" of the scripture, deity of Jesus, trinity, etc.
 - Any of those persecuted by Catholics and Reformed Protestants in Europe in the 1500-1700's.
 - Any of the believers persecuted in the world by atheistic governments, secular governments or Islamic states.
- So, a pre-trib rapture is to be a deliverance of a small, small slice of believers representative of a very narrow portion of time in church history. And, it is a doctrine that was not taught and not understood by mainline Christendom for 1800 years.
- BUT, it seems more likely that the rapture is a deliverance of believers from a time period in history of the greatest persecution that is so great that if it was NOT stopped it would wipe Christianity from the earth.
- Just like today's prosperity message only helps the few at the top of the pyramid scheme, so also the pretrib rapture only helps those few who are living at special time. The generation of Christianity that introduced the prosperous, easy-life of the believer is of course the same generation that is going to call someone a heretic for disagreeing with the pretrib rapture.
- The largest part of Christendom has NOT taught in the past nor accepted today the pretrib rapture:
 - Historically
 - Geographically
 - Denominationally (Creed)

Parousia = coming in Matthew 24:3 and 24:27 and 1 Thess. 4:15 and 2 Thess. 2:1

- Do not be deceived is mentioned 4x in Matthew 24:4-5, 11, 24
- Taken in the clouds:
 - Acts 1:9,
 - Matthew 24:30-31;
 - 1 Thessalonians 4:17,
 - Daniel 7:13;
 - Mark 14:62;
 - Rev. 1:7

Matt 24

1 Thes 4

2 Thes 2

Rev. 6, 7, 8