

7 Pre trib (rapture) problems

Part 2

The Precursor problem (do signs or specific events precede the rapture)

Intro

Comparison of Pre-Trib and Pre-Wrath teaching.

Not necessarily about proving one view right and the other wrong, but being good Bereans.

Recap

Pre-Wrath position based upon the 'triple lock'.

- That Joel 2:31, Matthew 24:30-31, and Rev 6:12-14 describe the same cosmic event.
- Thereby, chronologically linking these passages together (and placing their contextual information into a specific chronological sequence).

Premise of the video segment

If Scripture says that there is a precondition of the rapture taking place.

And, if we can tie this sign (that is a pre-condition of the rapture) into end time chronology (particularly Daniel's 70th week) then we have an idea when the rapture will take place.

If such a precursor sign to the rapture can be established, then the Pre-Trib doctrine of imminence, that there is no pre-condition sign, is discredited.

This is the relevance of tying, Joel, Matthew, and the 6th seal, together.

The Pre-Wrath argument

There are at least four events explicitly stated to come *before* the *Day of the Lord* in Scripture (and therefore prior to the rapture?)

Remember – Pre-Tribbers see The Day of The Lord as synonymous with Daniel's 70th week.

These 4 events are –

- The cosmic event of Joel 2:32 'before the day of The Lord'.
- The coming of Elijah before the great and dreadful day of The Lord, Malachi 4:5.
- The apostacy...
- And revelation of the man of sin, 2nd Thess 2:3.

The video concentrates on Joel, so we will begin there...

- 1) "The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, **before** the great and awesome day of the Lord comes" (Joel 2:31).

So, if we accept that the rapture directly precedes, or initiates, the day of The Lord, and link Joel with Matthew chapter 24 then...

Matthew's gospel makes it clear that the sun, moon, and star sign occurs "*immediately after the tribulation of those days*" ("*those days*," = the Great Tribulation).

Conclusion - If the cosmic sign comes **before** 'The Day of The Lord', and the rapture is back-to-back with the day of The Lord, and the same cosmic sign occurs **after the great tribulation**, according to Matthew, (which begins at the midpoint of Daniels 70th week). Then 'The Day of the Lord' cannot be equivalent to all of Daniels 70th week.

[Use slide to clarify]

Pre-Wrath assertions and assumptions

- A) That Joel 2:31 definitely says what it appears to say?
- B) The rapture and The Day of The Lord are 'back-to-back'.
- C) The Day of The Lord (tribulation/wrath of God) is not concomitant with Daniels 70th week

A) Joel 2:1-11, 28-32, 3:9-16. [Use the slide to help identify the points in time mentioned here].

- In Joel 2:1–11, the prophet describes the Anti – Christ's A.K.A. king of the Norths (v20, Daniel 11:36-45) invasion/occupation of Israel.
 - The invasion takes place **within** the Great and Terrible Day of the LORD, and is **followed** by the cosmic sign (v10).
 - The purpose of this invasion is to chastise Israel to repentance, ready for restoration (therefore it is not the battle of Armageddon).
 - According to the Prewrath position
 - Joel's cosmic sign **precedes** the day of The Lord (+ the rapture) but here it follows (or is within) the day of The Lord.
 - The invasion pictured here should occur **within** the Great Tribulation, not as it is depicted as occurring within the day of the Lord (slide).
- In Joel 2:28–32, Joel describes the cosmic event (apparently) **preceding** the Great and Terrible Day of the LORD (and **following** the national restoration of Israel v28-29).
 - However, if Joel 2:10 and 2:31 are the same event, then Israel repents **before** they are chastised by the invading army of 2:1-11.
- In Joel 3:9-15, the cosmic sign **follows** God gathering the gentile armies for the Armageddon campaign (Joel 3:2, Rev 14:14-20, 16:14-20) [unless this is the same invasion as Joel 2:1-11].

So, when is the single sign of Joel going to occur?

Or, are there more than one instance of the same sign?

If so, have we begun to pick (unlock) the Prewrath 'triple lock'?

But then...

- In Joel 2:30 – 31, Joel describes events that will occur just "before" the day of The Lord.
 - However, the word translated 'before' can refer to an event which is first within a series, not prior to.
 - For example, you could say, "Before we start study, let us pray." But is still a part of the time given over to the Bible study.

B) To discredit the Pretrib idea that no 'signs' precede the rapture, then the rapture and the day of The Lord must be 'back-to-back' events, for a 'sign' that apparently precedes the Day of The

Lord to also precede the rapture. Any gap between them, divorces the 'sign' as strictly being a precursor of the rapture.

Exhibit 1) Jesus' teaching in the Olivet Discourse, which says:

"But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, **until the day** when Noah entered the ark, and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man."

Exhibit 2) And in Luke's account (17:28-32) the parable of Lot is added to this:

"Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot—they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building, but **on the day** when Lot went out from Sodom, fire and sulphur rained from heaven and destroyed them all—so will it be **on the day** when the Son of Man is revealed."

Pretty conclusive, however –

Noah – Genesis 7:10 states that the flood started 7 days after Noah entered the ark.

Lot – Genesis 19:17-23 states that there was a delay between Lot leaving Sodom and God sending His judgement upon Sodom.

So, it would appear that there is a gap between when God shuts the door on salvation, and when He pours out His wrath (we will have more to say about these parables later).

- C) It is imperative to the Prewrath system (as stated) that the beginning of birth pangs (tribulation), the Great tribulation (2nd half of Daniel's 70th week) and the day of The Lord, when God pours out His wrath, are not concurrent, or overlap in any way (see slide).
- In Matthew 24:9, Jesus says that His witnesses will encounter 'tribulation'; a translation of the Greek word '*thlipsis*'.
 - Mt 24:9 occurs before v15 where Jesus refers to the Abomination of desolation, that Daniel tells us is set up in the middle of Daniel's 70th week.
 - This means Scripture recognises tribulation occurring in the 1st half of Daniel's 70th week.
 - Prewrathers acknowledge '*thlipsis*' means tribulation, but prefer to translate it 'birth pangs'.
 - But insist '*megale thlipsis*' be translated 'Great Tribulation in reference to the 2nd half of Daniel's 70th week.
 - However, in Scripture the concept of a woman's birth pangs involves tribulation (Jer 6:24, 50:43, John 16:21).
 - The Old Testament uses birth pangs (Hebrew 'tsarah') metaphorically for war (Jer 6:22-24, 50:41-43).
 - And, God's wrathful judgement (Isaiah 13:6-9).
 - Birth pangs continue into the 2nd half of Daniel's 70th week, the 'time of Jacob's trouble' synonymous with the Great Tribulation (Jeremiah 30:4-7).

- The day of The Lord is characterised by 'birth pangs' and tribulation (Isaiah 13:6-9, 1st Thess 5:2-3, Zephaniah 1:14-15).
- The Bible indicates that the sword, famine, and pestilence all identified with the first four seals of Revelation, and placed into the 1st half of Daniel's week, denoted 'birth pangs' involve tribulation (2nd Chronicles 20:9, Acts 7:11).
- How the 'Day of Jehovah' impacts the gentiles, akin to the first 4 seals of Revelation is detailed in (Isaiah 2:12-22; 13:6-16; Ezekiel 30:1-9; Joel 1:15-20; Obadiah 10-20; Zephaniah 1:14-18; and 2nd Peter 3:10-12).
- How the 'Day of Jehovah' affects the Israel is given in Ezekiel 13:1-7; Joel 2:1-11; 3:14-17; Amos 5:18-20; and Zephaniah 1:7-13.
 - As Arnold Fruchtenbaum says 'to limit all this to the last quarter of Daniel's 70th week [as the Prewrath position asserts] is mere assumption' [and practically unworkable].
- Luke 21:23 tells us that there will be great distress AND wrath upon the Jews simultaneously in 'the day of vengeance' (v22).
- Romans 1, and Ephesians 2, both tell us that man is under God's wrath today.

So, it is fair to say that the entirety of Daniel's 70th week is a time of tribulation, and that there is no need to limit the day of The Lord, or the outpouring of God's wrath, to a specific period within the week (we will say more on this later).

2) The coming of Elijah

Malachi 4:5 states, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD."

Doesn't this mean that the coming of Elijah would be a precursor to the Rapture if he comes prior to the day of The Lord?

- As already seen...
 - The rapture and the day of The Lord are not necessarily immediately sequential, or one initiates the other.
 - In Joel chapter 2 the same phrase 'the great and terrible/dreadful day of The Lord' is used and appears to describe the 2nd half of Daniel's 70th week.
 - Therefore, Elijah could be before or at the beginning of the 2nd half, years away from when the day of the Lord may begin, if it coincides with the beginning of Daniel's 70th week.

In the Prewrath camp, some proudly identify Elijah as one of the two witnesses who comes in the 2nd half of Daniel's 70th week claiming this can only work in their system.

- However, Luke 9:31 says that Elijah appeared 'in glory', which means he is no longer subject to death; in which case it is unlikely he will be one of the two witnesses that are martyred.

We will investigate the other two precursors, the apostacy and the revelation of the man of sin, when we look at 2nd Thess chapter 2.