

Articles and Sermons :: Christ's Return in the Clouds by Zac Poonen

Christ's Return in the Clouds by Zac Poonen - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2017/6/16 19:17

In 1 Thess. 4:13-18, Paul speaks about how it will be when Christ returns. "We don't want you to be uninformed about those who have slept in the Lord." That refers to those who have died in Christ. Jesus died and rose again; and those who have died in Christ will also rise again. When Jesus returns, we who are alive will not be taken up ahead of those who died in Christ before us. They will arise from the graves. That will be the first resurrection. And we will be taken up together with them to meet the Lord. Unbelievers will not rise for another one thousand years. They will rise in the second resurrection.

At His return, our Lord will descend with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God. Then all the saints will be caught up to meet the Lord in the clouds. Jesus spoke about these very same matters, when He spoke to His disciples about His return. He said, "Don't believe those who say, 'He is here' or 'He is there' or 'He has come secretly'" (Matthew 24:26). What He was saying was that He would not come secretly, as many believe today. When He comes, it will be like the lightning that flashes from the east to the west. Every eye will be able to see Him.

When will Christ's coming take place? Jesus answered that too: "Immediately after the tribulation" (Matthew 24:29). Many believe that Christ will rapture His saints before the tribulation. But there is not a single verse anywhere in Scripture that teaches that: That is a doctrine of men. Jesus Himself clearly stated that His coming would be after the tribulation. The events mentioned here in 1 Thess. 4:16, 17 are exactly the same as mentioned by Jesus in Matthew 24:30, 31: Jesus appearing in the clouds with the angels and a trumpet-sound, and the saints being taken up to meet Him.

In 1 Thess. 5:2, we read, "The day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night." A thief does not announce his coming, but comes unexpectedly. Thus, every unbeliever will be surprised when the Lord returns. We, the sons of light, however, are expecting our Lord to come (5:4). We do not live in darkness. So we should not be asleep spiritually, but alert (5:6).

How can we know whether we are awake or asleep? When a man is asleep, the things that are real around him in the room are invisible; but the things that are unreal (in his dreams) appear to be real. In the same way, a believer is spiritually asleep when the real things of eternity appear unreal to him, and the unreal things of this world appear real to him. This whole world is like an unreal dream when compared to heaven and eternity. The truly eternal things are the things of heaven. For believers who are asleep, the Lord will certainly come as a thief in the night. Paul says we look forward to that day and we eagerly await His coming.

People around us will be imagining that everything is peaceful and safe (1 Thess. 5:3). But destruction will come upon them suddenly. This destruction, it says here will come suddenly "like birth pangs upon a woman with child" (1 Thess. 5:3). Jesus used the same expression when speaking of the last days (in Matthew 24:8). Every woman knows that before she gives birth to a child there is a painful time of labour which can last for many hours. (Some mothers say that it was so painful that they felt like dying). It is only after that the child is born. This is a picture of the painful period of tribulation that will precede the coming of Christ. No child is born without those birth-pangs. And the coming of the Lord is not going to take place before this painful tribulation. We are not afraid of that period. It will be a great honour for us if the Lord allows us to be here as witnesses for Him and to lay down our lives for the sake of the gospel.

Re: Christ's Return in the Clouds by Zac Poonen, on: 2017/6/17 15:41

It will be a very glorious day! Amen!

Re: Christâ€™s Return in the Clouds by Zac Poonen - posted by staff, on: 2017/6/17 18:30

Hi All, I have to disagree with Zac's Assessment and I could equally say his doctrine is of man.

Jesus gave two very clear passages that everything will be as normal before he comes .Noah and Lot.I have said this over and over but I will give it again.Jesus said that they were eating and drinking and marrying and given in marriage and buying and selling and planting and sowing and and and ,UNTIL THE DAY.Until the day is used twice by Jesus to clearly say that everything is normal until the day the godly people go and immediately their is judgement by God Now you cant have ur cake and eat it especially during the tribulation.The tribulation is the worst time in human history ,world war 1 and 11 will be like a kindergarten show compares to the great Tribulation.The great tribulation will not be business as usual.

I have had responses before which say that somehow their will be eating and making merry during the tribulation in certain parts of the world or that of course people will have to eat and drink etc but thats not the picture Jesus is clearly painting by mentioning Lot and Noah.Everything was pretty ok in both societies ,sin was abound the people of Noah wouldnt believe him about Judgement and the People of Lot were roaming the streets at night looking to sin,not half starved or dying ravaged by Judgement

Zac Poonan:

(When will Christâ€™s coming take place? Jesus answered that too: â€œImmediately after the tribulationâ€ (Matthew 24:29). Many believe that Christ will rapture His saints before the tribulation. But there is not a single verse anywhere in Scripture that teaches that: That is a doctrine of men. Jesus Himself clearly stated that His coming would be after the tribulation. The events mentioned here in 1 Thess. 4:16, 17 are exactly the same as mentioned by Jesus in Matthew 24:30, 31: Jesus appearing in the clouds with the angels and a trumpet-sound, and the saints being taken up to meet Him.)

I would add again as a passing point that you cant study the end times and the tribulation without knowing the account of Elijah,Elisha and John the Baptist and the connection they have to times,time and half a time and the two witnesses etc I personally dont consider any end times teacher with any credibility from an inspiration point of view that doesnt understand that whole area and its importance.

I think Zac's Article is having the best of both worlds an easy tribulation and a difficult tribulation you just cant have it both ways Zac ,the bible clearly states the tribulation is a time like no other time when it comes to difficulty

Urs staff

Matthew 24:37-39King James Version (KJV)

37 But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Luke 17:28-37King James Version (KJV)

28 Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

29 But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.

30 Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

Re: Continuing questions and outright dilemmas - posted by docs (), on: 2017/6/17 19:28

1) The pre-trib view cannot be found in church history before the 1830s. No church scholar, teacher or denomination ever taught it.

2) To keep the view credible, pre-trib scholars changed the Day of the Lord as occurring at the end of the tribulation and now have it beginning at a pre-trib rapture of the church seven years earlier.

3) The majority of leading and famous pre-trib advocates teach that tribulation believers will not be part of the church even though they will be saved by faith and washed in the blood of Christ. John Darby was the first person in church history

y to ever propose this.

4) The pre-trib view teaches tribulation believers will not be indwelt by the Holy Spirit thus raising the possibility of being born again and a new creature in Christ without the Spirit residing within. Legitimate inquirers want to know if this is possible.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2017/6/17 20:05

Hi docs

The 4 points you've made have been hashed and rehashed over and over again.

One quick comment on them is that church history is not biblical hermeneutics.

I noticed you didn't comment on any of my points as it is crystal clear that there is a time of relative calm and normality before Jesus comes back which couldn't be at the end of the tribulation. This time of calm and normality couldn't be the tribulation, not possible. I'm not saying that post tribulation rapture is not correct categorically but I think it's clear to me that end times is not Zac Poonen's strongest points.

Yours staff

Re: - posted by docs (), on: 2017/6/17 20:23

Well I never hear mention of why after the 1930s the time of the Day of the Lord occurring was changed by seven years.

If those saved by faith and washed in the blood are not to be part of the body of Christ then this calls into question the nature of the church and the body itself.

Can we be saved today without the Spirit dwelling within us? If we can't then what good will it do for tribulation believers to profess Christ in faith?

I never hear these issues discussed by pre-trib, especially why the time of the Day of the Lord was changed by seven years. Are you familiar with this change and why pre-trib scholars did so?

Poonen is absolutely correct when he says Christ will return after the tribulation of those days. Matthew 24:29-31 backs him 100%.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2017/6/17 21:56

Hi Docs

This stuff has been dealt with over and over as I said and in fairness you have totally avoided my valid scriptural points which is your prerogative I guess.

Again the tribulation can't be an easy time when it suits our argument and the change it to be a hard time when it suits our argument. In my opinion Zac Poonen doesn't really have a handle on the end times and brings no insight into the subject other than quoting well-trodden scriptures for that viewpoint.

Noah and Lot,

Yours staff

Re: Until the day Noah entered the ark - posted by docs (), on: 2017/6/17 23:35

Jesus portrays people as eating and drinking and marrying and giving in marriage UNTIL THE DAY Noah entered the ark. THEN the flood came and took them away. The people and the world will be doing as they always have UNTIL THE DAY the tribulation comes. When they are saying there is peace and safety then sudden destruction will come upon them just like the days of Noah when they were doing what they always had until sudden destruction came upon them. The days of normalcy will end when the tribulation comes. The second coming of Christ will also be as sudden and as quick as final tribulation will begin to occur.

On the Day of the Lord, why would Paul be instructing the Thessalonians what to look for first that will herald the coming

of this day if Paul knew they were going to be raptured seven years before the day? There would be no need for him to go there. To get around this valid question regarding the pre-trib view the pre-trib scholars decided to change the timing of the Day of the Lord from occurring at the end of the tribulation. It was placed as beginning at a pre-trib rapture and to last a full seven years including the entire breadth of the tribulation. Though little known outside of academic circles this was done between the 1930s and the 1960s. In that way you could have a thief like pre-trib rapture and a thief like second coming. Many have not been inclined to accept such a sea change in scripture just to keep a view credible. If credible such momentous changes should not have to be made.

Re: Christ's Return in the Clouds by Zac Poonen - posted by proudpapa, on: 2017/6/18 0:29

RE : /// ...Unbelievers will not rise for another one thousand years. They will rise in the second resurrection.///

Revelations is a book filled with allegory.

1 Thess. does not speak of a 1,000 year earthly Kingdom.

RE : /// In 1 Thess. 5:2, we read, "The day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night."...

We find this same statement in 2 Peter 3:10 which says :

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night;"

It does not say what follows is a 1,000 year earthly Kingdom

It does say : 'in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat , the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up .'

It says nothing about looking forward to a new dispensation on this earth but it does say that : 'we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness'.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2017/6/18 6:32

Hi Docs

Your Comments:

.....
The people and the world will be doing as they always have UNTIL THE DAY the tribulation comes
The days of normalcy will end when the tribulation comes.
.....

These comments are exactly what I am saying "Normality ends when the tribulation comes"
Then how could Jesus be saying that "the coming of the son of man " will be after the tribulation?

But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

Jesus is clearly saying a couple of things

1:Everything will be normal immediately prior to my coming with the Noah/Lot examples which cant be the case if the rapture is immediately after the Tribulation.
2:The Holy people will be taken out before Judgement as was in the case of Noah(taken out by the Ark with all its symbolism) and Lot (taken out by Angels)
Now this taking out may not refer to a rapture as Pre trib believers thinks but it equally could be.It could be like the Ark the believers are kept totally safe.

Jesus coming only after the tribulation doesnt work with the Noah /Lot examples.

I think my comments are fair.I am not saying the Post Trib view is right or wrong ,I am saying that the view has a clear and obvious Timeline issue,
urs staff

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2017/6/18 6:44

Hi again

This is the Timeline issue I am talking about

NORMALITY(eating,building drinking etc)

THE GREAT TRIBULATION(worst time in human history,not normality)

COMING OF THE SON OF MAN

Versus

NORMALITY(marrying,sowing etc)

COMING OF THE SON OF MAN

THE GREAT TRIBULATION(worst time in human history,not normality)

The Noah and Lot examples are clear that it is the second option. Whether the "coming of the son of man" involves a rapture or not

urs staff

Re: - posted by docs (), on: 2017/6/18 8:44

Good morning staff,

Thank you for your comments. If Jesus Himself said His coming would be "after the tribulation" of those days (Matt 24:29-31) then there is no timeline problem whatsoever to a post trib appearing of Christ. He Himself said it.

Immediately after the tribulation of those days there will be a stellar darkness (24:29). THEN (24:30) the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the heavens and all the tribes of the earth shall see Him COMING on the clouds with power and great glory! AFTER THE TRIBULATION of those days.

The trumpet of Matt 24:31 is the last trumpet mentioned anywhere. There are no other trumpets after this very last one and Paul let us know that at the last trumpet (I Cor 15:52) is when we will all be changed and put on immortality (I Cor 15:50-52). A "last trumpet" that sounds seven or three and a half years before this cannot intelligently be called the last trumpet if another trumpet (Matt 24:29) is to be blown several years later. It's clear and rather simple basic eschatology 101 purposefully made clear to us by the Lord.

If the trumpet of I Thess 4:16 is when the saints all will be changed then it can't be the last trumpet because several years later another trumpet (24:31) is still to sound AFTER THE TRIBULATION of those days. To say the trumpet of I Thess 4:16 is the last trumpet when it is still to be followed by another trumpet is where the problem in timelines occurs. I would urge you to look at Matthew 24:29-31 more carefully. The first four words of verse 29 establish the timeline for all that follows. There can't be a last trumpet at a pre-trib rapture when all saints living and dead are to be changed if it is to be followed by another last trumpet which is indeed the very LAST trumpet Jesus referred to (Matt 24:31).

Thank you.

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2017/6/18 9:49

RE : /// The days of normalcy will end when the tribulation comes ///

Both verse 37 as well as verse 44 seem to me to teach an imminent return that falls on a world still filled with normalcy and is not expecting it, and not on a entire World that just experienced the worst Tribulation in history :

The Phrase Thief in the night would also seem me to indicate an : imminent return that falls on a world still filled with normalcy and is not expecting it, and not on a entire World that just experienced the worst Tribulation in history

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2017/6/18 10:30

Hi Docs

I respectfully complain that you have ignored completely what i have said and just carried on with a post tribulation view regardless of what i was saying .

Their is no problem with the Post tribulation of Christ agreed totally by me but their has to be also a pre appearance of Christ...

Let me put it another way

The only timeline that fits Matthew 24 is this

1:A Time of Noah and Lot ,Noah building his boat and Lot surviving in the evil city with all its carry on.People eating drinking building etc =Normality

2:The Son of Man Comes

3:Tribulation occurs on the whole Earth,A time like no other=No Normality

4:End of Tribulation immediately Darkness and the coming of Christ again.

Otherwise the examples of Noah and Lot are void and incorrect .The Judgement only comes when Noah and Lot were made safe by a supernatural event caused directly by God .I think everyone has to agree on that.

urs staff

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2017/6/18 10:39

Hi Proud Papa,

Maybe I have not put my point across well but the point is a very simple point which u touched on.

If the only appearance of Christ is a immediately after the Great Tribulation then it cant be a surprize,it cant be a coming after normality ,it cant be a thief in the night,their cant be normality just prior to Christs Return.

For instance I knew plenty of people non Christians before the year 2000 who thought or had a foreboding that we were near the end.They were wrong of course but after going through the Great Tribulation and seeing the skys go dark etc everyone would not be surprized by the end coming.In fact how could u be eating and drinking and making merry if sky was darkening

urs staff

Re: Christâ€™s Return in the Clouds by Zac Poonen, on: 2017/6/18 13:46

I've seen how many Christians are having argument and division about Pre-Trib and Post-Trib. It is just a waste of energy to "debate" what you think about this and that?

The most important thing now and everyday is to be Christlike and to look forward and be prepared to Jesus Christ Second Coming...

Debating and Disagreement will not change what is God's timeline for this earth...

Re: - posted by docs (), on: 2017/6/18 14:46

I didn't ignore your point. I stated that things were normal in the days of Noah until he entered the ark. Things were normal until the day Noah entered the ark, and they did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. Those rescued on the ark did not escape the flood by being taken completely away. They were provided a place of safety during it. A time of normalcy before the final tribulation does not mean Jesus is going to make a special second coming before the second coming to catch the church away. That is not what "as in the days of Noah" etc. means.

The pre-trib timeline is the one that doesn't work if the last trumpet is really the last trumpet. If all believers dead and living are translated at a pre-trib rapture it would have to be at the last trumpet (I Cor 15:50-52). Yet the very last trumpet is seen at the second coming (Matt 24:31). Pre-trib has a timeline of a last trumpet several years before another last trumpet.

Thank you for your comments and replies.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2017/6/18 15:23

Hi Docs

yes we are both agreed that it is "normal" until Noah entered the flood and "normal" until Lot was taken out of Sodom.

We are both agreeing I assume that things are "Normal" just before the tribulation.

We are both saying that both Lot and Noah are "kept safe"

I think it is fair then to say that whatever Godly people are around are going to be "kept safe" during the tribulation

I think its fair to say that the tribulation will not happen until those Godly people are brought to a "safe place"

We differ on what "kept safe" means

I think it is a supernatural event as with Noah and Lot possibly the rapture and you say it is not a second coming.

On that Jesus said the coming of the Son of Man will be like Noah and Lot which means that Jesus will come to bring a Judgement when the "Godly are safe" and cannot come until then.

May I add also that Jesus deliberately went out of his way to bring a witness(sort to speak) of two scriptures that are the same so that their can be no denying that the "Godly will be taken out or if you like kept safe"

The two events are supernatural "Angels in one" and "God "closes the door of the Ark "in another.

I dont debate about the Trumpet and you may be right.I really feel I dont know enough about the trumpets to bring anything insightful or new to the table .

All I think is fair to say is that there is a supernatural event prior to the Great Tribulation and Jesus definitely comes back after the The Great Tribulation

thanks for ur commennts urs staff