

FAQ 17

Bible Questioning The Pre-Wrath Rapture Of The Church

Q #17 What about the *Pre-Wrath Rapture* position?

The one raising this question also asked: You state multiple times (on your sites) the other end-time positions have difficulties. Your sites specifically list some problems of the Pre-Tribulation Rapture and the Preterit positions. Could you cite some of the difficulties of the Pre-Wrath (PW) Rapture position? (You only state in one place the timing of the Rapture—according to the PW position—is not biblically substantiated as taking place at the seventh seal. Could you be more specific and list some of the other major difficulties as you see them?)

Before we answer this question, we'd like to bring one important comment relating to the purpose of Endurance Ministries. One of our **major** goals is to help God's people in Jesus Christ be prepared for His return. This includes fostering a *watchful* mindset as He calls us to, time and time again. The Pre-Wrath and Post Tribulation Rapture positions include within their scenarios Christian (i.e., Church) presence during the Tribulation period. As a result, these other two premillennial positions do NOT contribute to ill-preparedness (for the Tribulation and Great Tribulation period) as does the Pre-Tribulation Rapture position. Given this common denominator of these positions, we do not see the Pre-Wrath or the Post Tribulation Rapture positions as "dangerous" positions. The Pre-Tribulation Rapture position, though, IF HELD DOGMATICALLY, is indeed a very dangerous position (when it comes to *readiness/preparedness*), for if the Rapture does not take place prior to the public emergence of the antichrist and the anti-God system he brings, those who fully believe in this position (without allowing for the other positions possibly being true) will indeed be like the five virgins who, even though they were waiting, find them-selves unprepared for the Groom's coming. (See Matthew 25 for the actual parable.) Similar concerns pertaining to preparedness are also true of the Preterist position due to the position's rejection of (pertinent-for-today) end-time passages. Please note this concern which motivates and brings direction to the way we go about ministry.

With that said, here is our answer to the question above. (We do have a more thorough handout on this question, so if you're interested in more detail, write to us and ask for our "Response to Pre-Wrath" article. Only snail mail requests for this article are being processed at this time.)

In addition to the lack of biblical reference for the timing of the Rapture as depicted by the Pre-Wrath advocates (i.e., the Rapture event is not found in Revelation 6 or 7), there are other weaknesses inherent in this position.

Using one of the early Pre-Wrath sources,* especially the "Summary" where the arguments are stated together, four concerns emerge (although we have other concerns):

1. "The Day of the Lord" is a key chronological reference of the position. Note the definition of this "day." Other definitions (of the phrase "the Day of the Lord") exist, making this particular definition only one of a few. IF the Day of the Lord is to be defined as it is so here in the Pre-Wrath summary,

then yes, the tenet is sound, but that's the point, the definition is not an open and shut case. Many offer other biblical definitions of "the Day of the Lord." The best question to ask is, "How does the biblical text define this period?" (Note: **Over one half** of the key position statements mentioned in this summary use "the Day of the Lord" and the understanding it begins at the 7th Seal. But where is this—the teaching that the Day of the Lord begins at the Seventh Seal—explicitly stated in the biblical text? This is indeed a weakness of the position.) (Summary statements #1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 13)

2. **Over one half** of the key position statements use the 70th Week of Daniel as a chronological measure. Given the interpretive difficulties tied to the 70th Week of Daniel, this is of concern to us. Why? Eschatological events take place after the conclusion of the 70th Week. It's also a concern to us that there is not one mention of Daniel 8:9-14 or 12:11 in this source—two passages pointing to the lack of support for the way in which the 70th Week is typically constructed by most Premillennial chronologies. (Summary statements #1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9 and 12)
3. About **one fifth** of the key position statements in this summary use "end" (*terminus ad quem*) to mean the 7th Seal. That's okay to suggest, but are there sufficient grounds to hold to this viewpoint to the degree it's often held—to the degree of certainty as it's presented in the workbook? Our point: Many attribute a different understanding to the term. The Pre-Wrath position understands "end" as taking place at the 7th Seal. One question: Is this clearly the case, biblically speaking? (Summary statements #11, 12, 13)
4. The phrase "Wrath of God" is defined in such a way whereby both the Trumpet blasts and the Bowls of wrath are included. We do not believe "wrath" is clearly included in the Trumpet blasts. (The Trumpets are not explicitly called "God's wrath." See FAQs #6 & #10 for more technical details on this matter.)

Our main point in bringing up these assumptions is quite simple. IF there are unsubstantiated interpretations (like those mentioned above) in any position, let alone this one, isn't it wise to remain open-minded about aspects of the position which are not explicitly stated in the Word of God? In other words, due to inherent assumptions within the position, we should acknowledge the strength of this position while at the same time keep the weaknesses (i.e., places where the position is not clearly biblically referenced) in proper perspective. Is this not a part of the *Berean* approach?

* *Examining the Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church*, pp. 112-114

Note: One potentially harmful fruit of wrongful belief (i.e., if the Rapture fails to occur as the PW position suggests) is that of great disappointment on the part of the advocate(s) of this position—when the Rapture does not occur prior to the Trumpet blasts. It is possible this could also contribute to ill-preparedness on the part of the expectant one(s) because there are still difficult days (the days transpiring during the Trumpet blasts) before the Final Trumpet Rapture event takes place. Once again, as in the case of the Pre Tribulation Rapture and Preterist positions, IF the Pre-Wrath position is held dogmatically, there is a greater possibility for ill-preparedness if the rapture fails to occur immediately after the opening of the seventh seal due to the intensity of the days of the Trumpet blasts.