



World Christian Fellowship

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Parable of the Fig Tree & Jesus Second coming **Mark 13:28-31, Luke 21:29-33** **Matthew 24:32-35**

Matthew 24:39-35, *“Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. ³³So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors! ³⁴Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. ³⁵Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. own message about His own second coming.*

The hope of every Christian is the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Bible says we are those who love His appearing.

- We are those who are looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.
- We are those who are eagerly waiting for the glory which shall be revealed in us.

- We are waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God, the glorious liberation of the children of God.
- We are waiting for the redemption of the body.
- We wait for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The day when the saints shall judge the world, when we shall all be changed, when death will forever be defeated along with sin, and we will enter into the presence of Christ, as Paul says, like a chaste virgin presented to a bridegroom. We long for the day when we shall be absent from the body and present with the Lord. The day when He shall appear and we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

The theme of the second coming fills the New Testament. It is the great anticipatory reality of Christian living.

We look back to the cross where our souls were redeemed. We look forward to the second coming when our bodies will be redeemed and we will enter the fullness of our salvation.

As Christians long for the day when Jesus comes because it is in that day that Satan will be defeated.

It is on that day that

- curse will be lifted.
- saints will be glorified,
- Christ will be worshiped,

- creation will be liberated, and
- sin and death will be eliminated.

With great anticipation do we look for the second coming of Jesus Christ. It is a real event that will happen as historically as His first coming with just as far-reaching and glorious impact.

Matthew 24 and 25 is Jesus' own sermon on His second coming.

Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself wanted to speak of His second coming, these are the terms in which He chose to speak of it.

As we hear the Saviour as He speaks to His disciples on the Mount of Olives and tells them that this is not the end, but He will return in glory and power to establish His kingdom.

Now, the sermon itself is called the Olivet Discourse because it was given by our Lord right on the Mount of Olives.

Recorded by **Matthew, Mark, and Luke** because of its tremendous importance.

We have been studying for the last few months on Matthew's account, which is the longest, most detailed look at the sermon given by our Lord.

The parable of the fig tree.

Background:

Jesus sits down with His disciples after climbing the Mount of Olives, which would be a good climb. They spent all day in the temple dialoguing with the religious leaders and the people.

Jesus preached His final word to the Jewish people.

Matthew 23:39, *for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' "*

He introduced His coming in glory.

He introduced His coming in power.

He introduced His coming in the kingdom that was promised by the prophets of old.

When they reached the top of Mount Olives, they asked Him privately.

V 3, *Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"*

The disciples want further information about Him coming, further information about that great time when He reigns as King of kings and Lord of lords.

They asked two questions:

When will it be?

What will be the signs?

Jesus answers those questions in reverse order.

The second question was answered from **V 4-35**.

However, the first question of “**When will it be?**” Jesus begins to answer from **V 36**.

V 36, *“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.”*

We are studying the section where Jesus answers their first question of **What are the signs?**

V 4-14 describing some general signs that would occur immediately prior to His second coming. Those signs were called birth pains (**V8**).

The birth pains come at the end of a pregnancy, and they result in the birth of the kingdom.

V 15, Jesus said there is one thing that signals the beginning of the birth pains. One thing triggers these general signs and it is the abomination of desolation.

When the antichrist establishes an idol of himself in the temple in the Holy of Holies in Jerusalem, and he will make the whole world worship him. That is the abomination of desolations and that begins with the great tribulation in which the birth pains take place.

What is the sign of Your coming?

Look for the abomination of desolation, and when you see it, run. Because what follows is going to be unlike anything the world has ever experienced.

Jesus described the birth pains, the rapid-fire intense things that are going to happen on the earth until finally the kingdom comes.

Jesus gave him the specific sign in **V 29-31**.

V 29-31 *“Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ³⁰Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. ³¹And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

Watch for the birth pains triggered by the abomination of desolation. When they are over, then comes the sign. The sign is the Son of Man in heaven. All the heavenly bodies have gone black. It is darkness in the universe and then appears the sign of the Son of Man in blazing glory in heaven come to defeat the wicked, to gather the elect and establish His kingdom.

Having given them those things as indicators, He knows in their mind they still have a question.

When all those signs begin, how long will it be?

How long until the Son of God reigns as King of kings and Lord of lords?

How long do the birth pains last?

How long is it from the sign in heaven to the kingdom on earth?

As transition into the “when” question, He gives this parable and its explanation in **V32-35**.

1. Analogy.

V 32, *“Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.*

Parables were for the purpose of making things clear to the disciples.

Matthew 13:10-11, *And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" "He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.*

Parables had a twofold purpose:

- Parable unexplained hid the truth.
- Parable explained made the truth clear.

When Jesus gave a parable to the multitude or to the religious leaders and never explained it, it was a riddle to them.

When He gave it to the disciples and explained it, it was an illustration that made things clearer.

Jesus says the reason I speak in parables is to hide things from the wise and prudent of this world and to reveal them unto babes.

- Parables explained become illustrations by which things are made clear.
- Parables unexplained are riddles by which things are made unclear.

Jesus explains to the disciples the parable so that it becomes a living illustration making the truth very clear.

It is an uncomplicated analogy.

For disciples these parables were for the sake of understanding not confusing.

They are not difficult to understand.

They are not complex.

They are uncomplicated analogies to illustrate a simple truth.

You do not have to have a Study Bible to understand or have gone to seminary or have great teacher.

Basically, everyone can stand on the same turf the disciples did with about as much understand, accept, and the simplicity of an uncomplicated analogy.

Instead of being an illustration of something, it becomes an allegory. Unless you understand the secrets of it, you can't even understand what it means.

It is an analogy of a fig tree, which they would easily understand since Israel was covered with fig trees.

Matthew 21:18-22, Jesus had already taught them one lesson from a fig tree.

He found a fig tree with leaves and no fruit, and He taught them lessons about barrenness and lessons about prayer.

He wasn't the first teacher who ever used a fig tree.

Judges 9:10-11, *"Then the trees said to the fig tree, 'You come and reign over us!' ¹¹But the fig tree said to them, 'Should I cease my sweetness and my good fruit, And go to sway over trees?'"*

Jotham uses a fig tree.

Hosea used figs to speak of the patriarchs.

Hosea 9:10, *"I found Israel Like grapes in the wilderness; I saw your fathers As the firstfruits on the fig tree in its first season. But they went to Baal Peor, And separated themselves to that shame; They became an abomination like the thing they loved."*

Jeremiah 24:2, *One basket had very good figs, like the figs that are first ripe; and the other basket had very bad figs which could not be eaten, they were so bad. ³Then the Lord said to me, "What do you see, Jeremiah?"*

God used to speak Jeremiah using baskets of figs to speak of good and bad people.

Joel 1:6-7, *For a nation has come up against My land, Strong, and without number; His teeth are the teeth of a lion, And he*

*has the fangs of a fierce lion. 7He has laid waste My vine,
And ruined My fig tree; He has stripped it bare and
thrown it away; Its branches are made white.*

God used through Joel to use the figure of a fig tree as an analogy to a spiritual lesson.

Revelation 6:13, *And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind.*

The commonness of the tree lent itself to the prophets and the teachers throughout the history of Israel using it as illustrative of certain spiritual truth.

Our Lord does just that here as He did at the beginning of the day when He cursed a fig tree. So, it was a common teaching aid.

Notice the word *““Now learn this parable from the fig tree”* when Jesus says to the disciples.

Don't just listen but get the message. To learn truly or genuinely so that it issues out in a habit. It's to learn something thoroughly.

Get the message, let it sink deeply into you.

Something didn't just hear but something that was truly habitual knowledge.

- It's the parable of the fig tree,
- It's the analogy of the fig tree,
- It's the lesson that comes out of this simple illustration.

V 32, *When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.*

None can misunderstand that.

When you see a fig tree put forth leaves, you know that summer is near. **What does that mean?**

It's time for fruit and harvest.

When the tree buds then it is spring.

Not complex at all.

“When the branch is yet tender”

In this time of year when the sap begins to flow through those branches, they become somewhat swollen and tender. Life begins to pulsate and push out the end of the branch in the form of a leaf.

There is a tenderness to the tree. There is a need to care carefully for that tree in that period of time.

When its branch is tender because it's soft with swelling sap and it pushes out its leaves, you know its spring. Spring means summer is near and summer means harvest.

Summer means harvest.

Whenever the Lord in the gospel of Matthew speaks about harvest, He is speaking about the time when He comes to separate the good from the bad.

Harvest in the gospel of Matthew speaks of judgment. Harvest speaks of the Lord's coming to deal with the good and the bad.

Matthew 3:10-11, *And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ¹¹I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.*

The fire he has in mind is the fire of judgment. The fire of judgment when a tree that has no fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire.

Matthew 3:12, *His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."*

They used a fan to throw the grain in the air and the chaff blew away and the grain fell back down. The Lord is going to sift the good from the bad and burn the chaff with an unquenchable fire.

John the Baptist looks to a harvest, and he sees the harvest as the time when God separates the evil and burns it and keeps the good and brings it into the barn, the barn of His own kingdom.

Matthew 9:36-38, *But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. ³⁷Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the labourers are few. ³⁸Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest."*

God is going to judge the world.

Jesus sees compassionately the whole harvest that is a whole field of men moving toward judgment, and desires that some be sent to warn them about the impending judgment when God will separate the righteous from the unrighteous.

Matthew 13:30, *Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn." ' ' "*

The harvest is seen as a time of distinguishing, a time of judgment, and a time of burning on the part of those that are evil, reward on the part of those that are good.

Matthew 13:40-43, *Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. ⁴¹The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, ⁴²and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!*

All those harvest in the gospel of Matthew is a time of rewarding that which is good and of burning and punishing that which is evil.

What the Lord is saying is very simple in this uncomplicated analogy. When you see the leaves come forth in the spring, you know that summer is near and there will be soon a harvest.

Since they would perceive the harvest to be the second coming, the coming of God's judgment, they would very easily understand the intent of what the Lord is saying.

2. Application.

V 33, *So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors!*

Jesus links the parable or the analogy to the application.

“When you see all these things.”

What are all these things?

The birth pains from **V 4-14**.

The abomination of desolation **V15**.

The need to flee because of great tribulation from **V 16- 28**.

The birth pains signal for the beginning of the calamities that come upon the earth.

Then the sign of the Son of Man in heaven as the sky goes black and the Son of Man appears in all His glory.

All these things Jesus says, when you see all these things, it's like the tree putting forth leaves, and you know that it is near.

What is it?

Luke 21:31, *So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near.*

“It” means the kingdom of God.

The kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

It is the end of man's day,
It is the beginning of God's day.

Revelation 20:4-5, *And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. ⁵But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.*

When Jesus Christ reigns with His redeemed saints for a thousand years upon the earth and Satan is bound. The glorious kingdom promised to Israel when Israel will be back in its land and will be preserved from all its enemies and become the servants of the Most High God. The time when Gentiles ten at a time will grab on to the skirt of a Jew and the Jew will take them to God that they may know the true God.

It is the time promised by all the prophets of old, that great kingdom.

Jesus is saying that when you see all these things know that it is near, so near it's knocking on the door. This is the metaphor used.

V 34, *Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.*

question comes immediately at this juncture: **What generation is He talking about?**

What generation isn't going to pass?

To pass means to die or come to an end.

The generation will not come to an end until all these things be fulfilled.

There are a lot of different answers.

Here are some of the options.

a) First View.

Some suggest that this generation refers directly to the disciples. Meaning that you disciples will not die before the second coming.

But that's not true.

All those people who hold that view say Jesus was wrong.

They say that Jesus was wrong because He even admitted.

Mark 13:32, *“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.*

They say Jesus even confessed His own ignorance.

Jesus confessed there that in His incarnation, He said He did not know. He chose not to have that knowledge. But it's one thing to choose not to have knowledge, it's something else to propagate something that isn't true.

Jesus in His incarnation may have restricted His knowledge, but He didn't lose His connection with the truth. That is an unacceptable view.

Jesus is not wrong. He is not mistaken. He is not uttering ignorance at all.

In His incarnation, He puts self-imposed limits on elements of His own deity and the expression of His divine knowledge, but at no point in time did He ever utter anything out of His mouth that was not true.

There is no reason to believe this generation means "this little group of disciples" because if that's what He meant, He could have said, "You will not pass away until all these things be fulfilled."

b) Second View

Another view is that it refers to the disciples, but the thing He has talking about being fulfilled was the destruction of Jerusalem in **70 A.D.**

They say this whole chapter is all about 70 A.D., that it doesn't describe the second coming. This is a very popular view and many of the commentaries will hold this view.

Jesus is saying that you are going to be here, this generation right now, you disciples and the people of your time are going to be here in 70 A.D. when all this happens.

That also is an unacceptable view because you cannot confuse the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 A.D. with the second coming of Jesus Christ.

They were not asking Him about the coming of Romans, they are asking about the coming of Christ.

V 3, Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

They didn't ask Jesus about **"What is the sign of the Romans coming?"**

Jesus answered their question.

Their question had to do with His coming. There is no way under the sun that you can fit all these events into 70 A.D.

When in 70 A.D., for example,

- The sun was not darkened,

- The moon did give its light,
- The stars were not falling out of heaven, and
- The Son of Man did not appear in heaven in gathering the elect from the four corners of the earth.

Did all the tribes on the face of the earth mourn?

Absolutely impossible.

In 70 A.D., it was the Romans against the Jews.

- It wasn't nations rising against nation,
- Kingdom rising against kingdom,
- earthquakes and pestilences all over the world.

It cannot refer to 70 A.D., so that also is an unacceptable view.

c) Third View

The third view is that it refers to the Jewish race.

What Jesus meant when He said "***This genea,***" He could refer to a stock or a kind or a race of people, that's true.

He was saying, "This generation of Jews, this Jewish people, will not die until all these things come to pass."

Jesus is predicting the survival and continuity of the Jewish race until the second coming.

This is true.

The Jews will survive until the second coming.

But again, this is not a good interpretation here for a couple of reasons.

A reason that comes to my mind is that it doesn't say "Israel," and if the Lord was talking about Israel, it would seem to me He would say that.

Jesus no way refers to the covenant people to just call them "this generation" instead of saying "My people."

Jesus would have said "My people shall not pass away till all these things be fulfilled." To call them "this generation" seems to be a rather indifferent way to speak of the covenant people.

Why would Jesus even bother to say they are going to survive until the kingdom when that wasn't even a question in the minds of the disciples?

The disciples believed in the survival of Israel because they believed in the everlasting nature of the covenants.

They believed that God made covenants He was intending to keep and so they weren't even asking, "Is God going to bail out on all of this?"

They just want to know when it's going to come.

d) Fourth View

The **genea** or this generation means God rejecting, Christ rejecting, kinds of people.

The kinds of people that rejected Jesus.

Like the people that all the time they are in the temple that hate what Christ stand for, God-hating, Christ-rejecting, false religious people are going to be around until the second coming.

There will be the continuous of evil Christ-rejectors.

Genea can mean that.

In the Old Testament, Greek Old Testament, Septuagint version, for the word “door” in Hebrew, which sometimes is translated “this evil generation” or “this righteous generation.”

They say it means this evil generation is going to be around until Jesus comes, so don’t expect things to get better, there will always be wretched, God-hating, Christ-rejecting people among the Jewish races. All the way until the second coming.

Again, that’s a possible view but it is vague, and it seems that it’s not consistent with the context nor with the issue in the hearts and minds of the apostles.

They were not concerned about whether evil people are going to survive until the second coming. They were concerned about when it is going to happen and what are the signs.

e) Fifth View.

Probably this is the one we have been exposed to.

The fig tree is Israel.

An illustration of a fig tree but it doesn't say in the Scripture that the fig tree is Israel.

Somebody along the line says the fig tree is Israel. Jesus didn't say that. So now you have stopped the analogy, and you have got an allegory.

If the fig tree is Israel and when it puts forth its leaves, that is the statehood of Israel in 1948.

when Israel becomes a state, in the first place, Jesus didn't say that.

How in the world the disciples would have ever perceived the statehood of Israel in 1948?

Impossible.

Jesus is illustrating for them the things He is teaching them. He is trying to make clear what He has taught them. He is not trying to say something to them that is so infinitely obscure

that it could never be perceived by anybody who lived before 1948.

How can we conclude that the life pulsing through the fig tree and pushing out leaves is the statehood of Israel?

Certainly, if we are thinking that way, it would have to be if the tree was Israel and it started to put forth leaves, we would assume that it was life coming into Israel. Life coming into Israel would be spiritual, not physical. Israel, though alive today, is one of the most secular nations on the face of the earth.

So, it doesn't make a good allegory of the spiritual revival of Israel.

Why would the Lord talk about only the statehood of Israel? When the context has nothing to do with the survival or restoration of the nation Israel but has to do with the second coming of Jesus Christ?

This is also an unacceptable and imaginative view.

f) Right View

When the branch is tender and puts forth leaves, you know that judgment is near.

When you see all these things?

The leaves.

What are the leaves?

The birth pains.

The sign in heaven.

All the things Jesus has been describing through the whole chapter.

When you see all those things, do you know that judgment is near?

This generation that sees all those things will not end until the rest is fulfilled.

What Jesus is saying that they are wondering how long is that going to take, and when we see the sign – the signal, rather, or the abomination of desolations and start to see the other birth pains and then all of a sudden the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, how long is that going to take?

Jesus is saying is the generation that sees all these things will not die off until everything is fulfilled.

Jesus is emphasizing again the concept of the pushing forth of a leaf. When you see the leaf, you know summer is near.

Birth pains come in rapid-fire at the very end, just before birth. So, if you see the leaf, you know that you are going to be alive in the summer.

If you see the birth pains, you know you are going to be alive at childbirth.

The generation that is alive and sees and experiences the phenomena of signs and wonders at the end time will not die off until all these things are fulfilled.

When it comes, it will come fast.

We are learning that it is a period of seven years called the time of Jacob's trouble, but the real tribulation period lasts **3 ½ years, 42 months, 1260 days**.

That is reiterated again and again by Daniel and John.

The generation that is alive when it begins is going to still be around when it ends because, it lasts only 3 ½ years.

This is what Jesus is saying to them.

V 15, You see the abomination of desolations.

V 16, Run to the mountains.

Why?

V 21, a great tribulation is coming upon the earth.

Get out as fast as you can get out. It is going to come fast and furious.

It is going to be ended by the sign of the Son of Man in heaven because immediately after that 3 ½ year period, the sky begins to fall, and the Son of Man appears.

He is ready to establish His kingdom.
He just summarizes that so beautifully.

Jesus says those of you who see the signs will see the end.
The clearest, simplest, unmistakable application of what our Lord said to make things clear.

Anything else is unclear.
Extremely consistent with the context.

Who is this generation?

What generation will be alive then?

What generation will be alive to see these signs?

Among Christians, there are two views.

a) The Church will go through Tribulation.

Some say the church will be there.

A post-tribulation view.

We will be taken out of the world after the Tribulation.

They say that the church will go through tribulation.
Some of us will get slaughtered in the process.

We will still go to heaven, but we will get slaughtered. Some of us will survive, but we will go through it and be post-tribulation raptured.

We will go up and meet the Lord in the air and come back down for the kingdom.

b) The Church will NOT go through Tribulation.

We believe that in a pre-tribulation rapture.
Before any of this, we are taken out and we spend time with the Lord and come back at the end of the seven years.

We will not be that generation.
The redeemed church will not go through Tribulation.

Some who are listening to this may, who don't know Jesus as their Lord and Saviour because they will not go in the Rapture.
They will be that generation who will see those things.

Depending on whether you are saved or not, and how much you know about the Bible, you will either know what's going on or you won't know what's going on.

But the church will not be here.
We will be taken out.

The reasons.

i) The book of Revelation and Tribulation.

The church in the book of **Revelation** appears in chapters 2 and 3.

Our Lord writes to the church, purifies the church, and then ends that whole section at the end of chapter 3 with the idea that He stands at the door, a knock, ready to come.

Revelation chapter 4 the church is in heaven.

The church is in heaven in chapter 5.

Chapter 6, the Tribulation breaks out on earth.

From **chapters 6-18**, the whole of the Tribulation, there is never one mention of the church.

Never one mention of any local church or how the church ought to act. The word “church” isn’t there.

The absence of the church from **Revelation 6-18** seems to me rather significant, especially when they were on earth in **2 and 3** and in **4 and 5**, they are in heaven.

ii) **No Instruction to the Church about Tribulation.**

There is an absolute absence of literature in the New Testament to instruct the church about how to endure the Tribulation.

The scripture doesn't give any instructions on how to conduct itself in the Tribulation.

The church is not mentioned in **Matthew chapter 24** as such, and it is a unique group of people, from Pentecost to the Rapture that I'm speaking of.

But the unique church is not mentioned here in Matthew 24, and there are no warnings given to us about the Tribulation, how to deal with it, how to live through it, and how to handle the antichrist kind of thing as a church.

The only church that we can find during that period is called the mystery harlot, Babylon, the prostitute, the false church which is to be destroyed.

iii) **Eliminates the Rapture.**

The Rapture seemed to be pointless.

The Rapture is described in **1 Thessalonians 4** where we are caught up to be with the Lord in the air and ever are we with

the Lord. That seems pointless if it happens at the second coming.

Why bother to go up and come right back down again?

If Jesus is coming to earth with His saints to reign and rule, why doesn't He just come down and we will meet Him right here when He gets here.

How long does it take Him to get from up there to down here?

It eliminates the point of the Rapture.

Why does Paul make such a great point about the Rapture if that's all there is to it?

If all the believers are raptured up at the second coming and come back with Him, who is left on earth alive to populate the kingdom?

In other words, when the Lord comes, the Bible says He will destroy all the wicked. If He comes down and raptures all the redeemed, all the redeemed are raptured, all the unredeemed are destroyed, there is nobody left on earth to populate the kingdom except spiritually glorified beings.

The Bible says there will be children born during the kingdom, who's going to have those kids. There is got to be people there. There must be people going in because they will produce a whole generation.

They will produce a whole population, many of whom will not even believe and will start a rebellion at the end.

Somebody is got to be alive, but if the Rapture occurs at the same time as the second coming, then all the redeemed are out and all the unredeemed are destroyed then there is nobody left to populate the kingdom.

Revelation 3:10, *Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.*

Jesus is not talking about some little trial that comes upon the church at Philadelphia, or some local deal, but they will be rescued from out of that period of time, and literally what trok means is a state of continued existence outside.

It isn't that we will be taken out of the middle of it as a mid-tribulation view might say, it isn't that we will be kept in it but kept from it.

It is that we will be maintained in a condition outside of it.
I believe we will be kept out of that.

John 14:1-3, *“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.²In My Father’s house are*

many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

Jesus is preparing a place in the Father's house which is up there in glory.

This tells us that He is not going to come down here to be where we are, but He is going to take us to be where He is.

If you have a post-tribulation Rapture, He is simply taken us up halfway, put us right back, and come to be where we are.

The whole point of John 14 is that He is preparing a place for us to be where He is. That is where we go in the Rapture and remain for those years until we return for the glory of the kingdom and all that it promises.

The nature of the church is unique.

The Church that was born at Pentecost didn't exist before that.

At the Rapture the church is taken out of the earth and that the Tribulation time is called the time of Jacob's trouble.

Jacob's trouble is particularly for Israel that God goes back to dealing with them.

Romans 11 where Israel was cut off and the church was grafted in but He says don't be too proud because the time will come when you are cut off and Israel is re-grafted.

God is going to go back to dealing with Israel.

It's the 70th week of Daniel.

We weren't in the first 69, why should we be in the 70th?

A time for God to deal with Israel.

The distinction of Israel, the nature of the church sets them apart, and so we will not be in it.

Have you ever thought about the fact that Paul wrote the Thessalonians, and they were all upset because some Christians died, and they thought they had missed the Rapture?

They thought they had missed the second coming. They have died and so he writes them and says don't sorrow about the people that sleep, don't be sad about them, because when the Rapture comes, you will not precede them. The dead in Christ shall rise first.

If the Christian church is looking for the Tribulation and not the Rapture, then they would have been sad that they were alive. They would have reversed their problem and said those blessed saints that have died, and they are already with the Lord, we must go through the Tribulation?

But they were looking for something which was joyous and felt bad that people might die and miss it, which proves to me they were not looking for the antichrist, they were looking for Christ.

They were not looking for the Tribulation, they were looking for glory, and that's consistent with the Christian hope.

The blessed hope is not looking for antichrist.

We are waiting for Christ.

- At the Rapture, the church meets Christ in the air.
- At the second coming, Christ returns to the earth with the church.

- At the Rapture, Olive is untouched.
- At the second coming, it's split in half.

- At the Rapture, living saints are translated.
- At the second coming, no saints are translated.

- At the Rapture, the world is not judged, and sin gets worse.
- At the second coming, sin is judged, and the world gets better.

- At the Rapture, the body goes to heaven.
- At the second coming, it comes to earth.

- The Rapture is imminent.
- The second coming has very distinct signs.

- The Rapture concerns only the saved,
- The second coming concerns the saved and the unsaved.

The Rapture and the second coming are two different things with a time period in between.

This generation refers to the people that are alive at that time that were not taken in the Rapture because they did not know the Saviour. They will be Jews and Gentiles.

But during the time of the Tribulation, God sends 144,000 Jews to witness all over the world according to **Revelation 7**.

Jews are saved.

Gentiles are saved.

They can't even be counted.

We have a redeemed group and an unredeemed group of Jews and Gentiles that have not gone in the Rapture because their salvation came after that, or they have never been saved.

They are the generation who will see these things come to pass. When they start to see them come to pass, they will not die off until all those things are fulfilled.

3. Alteration.

V 35, Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.own message about His own second coming.

Unbelievable statement.

Heaven and earth shall pass away.

You see the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, you have already seen the collapse of the stellar bodies, everything is moving into chaos.

God is going to shorten the daylight hours during the day. The tides will go crazy.

As we know it, heaven and earth will end.

The earth that we know, the heaven that we know, will cease.

We have read much Revelation and many things written by Isaiah the prophet and others. We know that heaven and earth are going to pass away as we know them.

In their place there is going to come a new creation.

But My words shall not pass away.

That is an unchanging authority.

Jesus closes the parable with an unchanging authority.

Luke 16:17, *And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the law to fail.*

He said heaven and earth will pass away and it's easier for them to do that than for one tittle out of the law to pass away.

Matthew 5:18, *For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.*

John 10:35, *If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken)*

If we believe the Word of God, we believe this is going to happen!

Are you ready for that?

To go with the Lord's raptured people to be in His presence or do you find yourself staying for the holocaust that follows?

Seeing that you know all these things, **what manner of people ought you to be?**

- ✓ You ought to be godly and holy.
- ✓ You ought to be looking for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- ✓ You ought to be growing in grace.
- ✓ You are a redeemed person looking for Saviour.