



Tonight, we will be concluding our series by looking at the biblical proof for the pre-tribulation “gathering” or “rapture”. We will begin by looking in 1 Thessalonians which is the first of 14 letters that Paul wrote. This is important because in the New Testament they are not put in chronological order.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 KJV

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

It is very important that we understand that the revelation of a “coming messiah” was revealed in the Old Testament all the way back to the days of Jacob which was 4060 years ago.

Jacob - Quick Bio

Jacob was born around 1952 BC. He lived for 147 years. He was in many famous stories in the bible.

His father was: Isaac
His mother was: Rebekah
His brother was: Esau
Grandfather was: Abraham
Jacobs children: 12 boys, one girl (named) and more
Jacob was renamed: Israel
Jacobs famous son: Joseph

Before his death, Jacob blessed or foretold the destiny of each of his sons. All these are the twelve tribes of Israel.

12 Tribes Of Israel

- | | | | |
|----|-------------------|----|-------------------|
| 1 | Tribe of Reuben | 2 | Tribe of Simeon |
| 3 | Tribe of Levi | 4 | Tribe of Judah |
| 5 | Tribe of Issachar | 6 | Tribe of Zebulun |
| 7 | Tribe of Dan | 8 | Tribe of Naphtali |
| 9 | Tribe of Gad | 10 | Tribe of Asher |
| 11 | Tribe of Joseph | 12 | Tribe of Benjamin |

When Jacob was blessing His sons in Genesis 49:10 He said...

Genesis 49:10 KJV

*10 The **sceptre** shall not depart from **Judah**, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.*

Now, Judah was Jacob's son, but He would also become the royal tribe of Israel. The Word sceptre here in Genesis 49 is mentioned in Numbers 24:17 as well...

Numbers 24:17 KJV

*17 I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a **Sceptre** shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.*

This word "sceptre" here is talking about royalty, a royal position, the identity of kingship. So, a royal king is going to arise in Israel and that **prophecy** goes all the way back to Jacob (4060 years ago) and tells us that He will come from the line of Judah.

Going back to Genesis 49:10, there's another prediction given

Genesis 49:10 KJV

*10 The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until **Shiloh** come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.*

The second part of this prophecy - the first being the sceptre shall not depart from Judah is “until Shiloh comes”. Shiloh according to the rabbinical teaching is a title for “the messiah”.

Now in the book of Daniel (9:25-28) The word “Messiah” in the King James translation, is mentioned. The hebrew word there is mashiach. Mashiach means “the anointed one” or “messiah”.

Daniel 9:25-27 KJV

25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

When you say that Christ is the “anointed one” in Hebrew, you have to say that “He is the messiah” because that is how it is interpreted or translated in the book of Daniel.

When we come to the New Testament we read “Jesus Christ” or the “Lord Jesus Christ”. The word Christ is significant because that word in the greek is Christos. That word Christos means “the anointed one”.

When you hear Christ or Jesus Christ, it is not referring to God or man but specifically to the Messiah that was spoken of in Daniel and the revelation of the Messiah goes back to Jacob (4060 years ago or 1952bc).

It was known in the Old Testament that this “Messiah” would set up a kingdom that would not end. The book of Daniel brings this out in his prophecies. It says that the most high and the saints of the most high would possess a kingdom that would not end.

So it was known unto the Jews that there would be a man coming, “mashiach”, who would be the “anointed one”. This man would raise the dead, he would be a king and he would have the ability or power to forgive them of their sins.

That’s the concept that the Old Testament scribes had of the mashiach or Messiah. Now, Jesus comes along and fulfills the prophecies of the bible, but.....

The idea of the Messiah setting up the kingdom is where it all starts to get interesting. The jews were taught **a resurrection**, but they were also taught that when the Messiah comes **His kingdom is set up on earth**.

Every Old Testament Jew looked for the Messiah to set up an earthly kingdom in Israel / Jerusalem. The part that they did not understand which is revealed to the New Testament believer is that there is a kingdom of God here on the earth but that there is also a kingdom of heaven, in heaven.

Matthew 3:2 KJV

2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Matthew 4:17 KJV

17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand

The New Testament reveals that there is a heavenly kingdom in which believers who believe in Mashiach will go to prior to Mashiach setting up His kingdom on earth.

This was hidden in the Old Testament and then revealed by the apostle Paul in this first letter where the Lord would descend from heaven and we (followers or imitators of Christ) would be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord up in the air.

Key Points

- o The revelation of Jesus coming for His people - we call that “the church”, was revealed to Paul in the New Testament.
- o It was revealed after the gentiles were drafted into the covenant.
- o The coming of Jesus for the church is a blessing for the overcomer.

This is why you read in scripture (parables) that the servants who were unprofitable, were cast out into the outer darkness of tribulation. Then the story of the 10 virgins - 5 wise and 5 foolish, the wise go into the kingdom or wedding and the 5 foolish do not.

**The rapture is not a blessing for salvation,
it is a blessing for faithfulness!**

Revelations chapter 2 and 3 is the key - this is where John is addressing 7 churches. Called out ones or believers and he calls out 5 of them and says if you don't do what is right I will take away your candle stick, I will spue/spew you out of my mouth - he was telling them straighten up or else...

7 Blessings If You Overcome

You will eat of the tree of life in the paradise of God.

You will not be overcome by the second death - you will defeat it.

You will have hidden manna, a white stone and a new name in the heavenly city.

You will be given the morning star (that's Christ)

You will be clothed in white and be confessed before the angels and my father.

I will make you a pillar in the heavenly temple and in the new Jerusalem.

You will sit on my throne as I sat on my fathers throne

What do all of these blessings have in common? They are all heavenly - none are earthly.

Everyone of these blessings, you have to be in heaven to get it. That means we have to take a trip to heaven not only to get rewarded but...

- o How am I going to sit on His throne as He sat upon His fathers?
- o How am I going to get a new name that deals with the new Jerusalem when the new Jerusalem is in heaven?
- o How am I going to eat of the tree of life in paradise here on earth - when there's not a tree of life here - it's in the holy city up in heaven.

I've got to be in heaven for these, therefore the blessings for the overcomer are all kingdom of heaven blessings.

I don't know of anyone of those blessings to my knowledge that is fulfilled down here in the earthly kingdom. So what does that mean? that means if John is telling the church in Revelation that there is a heavenly reward or rewards in heaven. we need to get there somehow and there are only 2 ways of getting there: dying or going in the rapture.

Why am I saying all of this? many christians don't know what Gods Word says. They don't think theres a rapture prior to the 7 year tribulation. Once you get all of this lined up, the facts, Gods Word, the truth - you start living differently, you start speaking differently, you start acting differently.

There is a blessing for faithfulness, for being a witness, making disciples, being holy, repenting and being obedient to the Word - being raptured from all the tribulation that will be taking place.

We are going to be looking at 4 main scriptures that deal specifically with the coming of the Lord for the church. In general, we will use the word “Rapture” as referred to by English theologians so we all know what I’m talking about.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 KJV

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Key Word: Caught up together

The meaning: To seize or pluck up by force

The Greek translation : harpazó

Phonetic Spelling: (har-pad'-zo)

Part of Speech: Verb

Definition: to seize, snatch, obtain by force, to take by an open display of force, yank out of danger's way,

Before the tribulation comes, He (God) wants to snatch us out of harm's way - yank us up by force so we don't go through it.

Ephesians 1:10 KJV

10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:

Key Word: Gather together in one

The meaning: To sum up together in one

Greek Translation: anakephalaioó

Phonetic Spelling: (an-ak-ef-al-ah'-ee-om-ahee)

Part of Speech: Verb

Definition: to sum up, to summarize, gather up in one place

This is the act of summing it up, or summarizing, gathering it all together once in for all in putting everything that is out there collectively in one location.

2 Thessalonians 2:1 KJV

2 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

Key Word: Gathering together

The meaning: A complete collecting of

Definition: to sum up, to summarize, gather up in one place

Greek Translation: episunagóge

Phonetic Spelling: (ep-ee-soon-ag-o-gay')

Part of Speech: Noun, Feminine

Definition: a gathering (collecting) together, assembling of the living and the dead all in one location.

Among the Jews of the Old Testament, this “episunagoge” was called the great assembly.

Hebrews 12:22-24 KJV

22 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

Key Word: General assembly

The meaning: To assemble all

Greek Translation: panéguris

Phonetic Spelling: (pan-ay'-goo-ris)

Part of Speech: Noun, Feminine

Definition: a festival assembly or to assemble all, universal meeting.

When are our spirits going to be made perfect? at the resurrection of the dead or the coming of Christ.

The significance of these phrases or terminology is that everyone shows up in one location. That is what's important about understanding these 4 passages in the New Testament because its the dead and the living joining together in one place.

We are not in one place now. If you have lost a loved one that has gone to be with Jesus they are in paradise.

2 Corinthians 12:1-4 AMP

1 True, there is nothing to be gained by it, but [as I am obliged] to boast, I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord.

2 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—was caught up to the third heaven.

3 And I know that this man—whether in the body or away from the body I do not know, God knows—

4 Was caught up into paradise, and he heard utterances beyond the power of man to put into words, which man is not permitted to utter.

Their soul and spirit (2 Corinthians 12) is in the 3rd heaven which is paradise and you are separated from them - you and I are alive on earth.

But, “the coming” is to resurrect the dead in Christ and we who are alive shall meet them in the air. And so shall we ever be there with the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 KJV

13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 AMP

13 Now also we would not have you ignorant, brethren, about those who fall asleep [in death], that you may not grieve [for them] as the rest do who have no hope [beyond the grave].

14 For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will also bring with Him through Jesus those who have fallen asleep [in death].

15 For this we declare to you by the Lord's [own] word, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord shall in no way precede [into His presence] or have any advantage at all over those who have previously fallen asleep [in Him in death].

16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a loud cry of summons, with the shout of an archangel, and with the blast of the trumpet of God. And those who have departed this life in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we, the living ones who remain [on the earth], shall simultaneously be caught up along with [the resurrected dead] in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so always (through the eternity of the eternities) we shall be with the Lord!

So the two, (dead in Christ and those living) are coming together ! Thats why the word(s) gathering or gathering together or coming together is used when its is talking about Jesus coming back for His people.

These four passages tell us something about Gods Plan for the faithful ones: In **1 Thessalonians 4:16-17**, before the 7 year tribulation comes, He (God) is going to snatch us out of harms way - yank us by force so we don't go through it.

In **Ephesians 1:10**, this is the act of summing it up, or summarizing, gathering it all together once in for all in putting everything (follower of Christ) that is out there collectively in one location.

In **2 Thessalonians 2:1**, he is talking to the Great Assembly. In **Hebrews 12:22-24**, our spirits going to be made perfect at the resurrection of the dead or the coming of Christ. Gods Word is saying, is that there are living people caught up and dead people who are raised. He is calling this the general assembly and the church of the first born.

Who Is At The General Assembly?

- 1. The dead in Christ.**
- 2. The living that have been changed from immortal to immortality. (Those caught up in the rapture)**
- 3. The angels**
- 4. Jesus Christ**
- 5. God the Father**

Dead saints, living saints, angels, Jesus, and God the father all gathered together in one location in the heavenly throne room.

The word “panéguris” means a universal meeting as well. It is not just one selected location - its everybody universally coming together in one place. The Old Testament jews called or used this word as the “great assembly”.

After the destruction of Solomon's temple the jews went into Babylonian captivity. After 70 years when they returned from captivity they came back to Israel and rebuilt the temple.

Last week we looked at the 2 main books that deal with this and that is the book of Ezra and the book of Nehemiah. All the jewish sources in history will identify the same teaching of this...

A group of elders met from 410 BC to 310 BC (a period of 100 years). These elders were members of the Jewish Sanhedrin that had 70 members. Ezra and Nehemiah decided to expand it to 120 members.

These 120 members were brought together by the scribe Ezra (meaning: the person who wrote the book of Ezra). These men kept what was called the “oral tradition”.

There's much written in the Torah (which is the first five books of the bible) but there's things that were not written down as well.

In the four gospels there is much written about Jesus but the bible says in John that if all the works that He did could be written while He was living all the earth couldn't contain in books what Jesus did.

John 21:25 KJV

*25 And there are also many other **things** which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.*

In order that the “oral tradition” (these are things that Moses taught Joshua and Joshua taught the elders which taught their kids) would not be lost - they wrote these things down. This is called the jewish “oral tradition” in which the jewish people study to this day and it came out of this special meeting.

So, this is what happened, these men put together the hebrew bible: the torah, the prophets and the writings and they formalized all the prayers that would be prayed around the jewish temple and around feast days which the jews celebrate to this day and still keep them even though they don't have a temple.

Then, they gave the bible or the scrolls to the common man in the synagogue to be able to read. This is what this group, called the great assembly did. Haggai was part of it, Zechariah, Malachi, Ezra and Nehemiah were part of this during the 100 year period.

This is where it gets even more interesting...today there is the Israeli Knesset,

The word kneset means assembly, and it just so happens there is 120 members. Where did they get this from? they got it from Ezra and Nehemiah assembling the 120 members or elders together. That's where the kneset originates from in Israel politics.

The Knesset Defined

The Knesset (Hebrew: the gathering or assembly;) is the unicameral legislature of Israel, located in Givat Ram, Jerusalem. The legislative branch of the Israeli government, the Knesset passes all laws, elects the President and Prime Minister (although the latter is ceremonially appointed by the President), approves the cabinet, and supervises the work of the government. In addition, it also recommends a candidate for the State Comptroller to the President, who appoints someone to the post. It also has the power to waive the immunity of its members, remove the President and the State Comptroller from office, remove a Prime Minister convicted of an offense involving moral turpitude, and to dissolve itself and call new elections. The Prime Minister may dissolve the Knesset. However, until an election is completed, the Knesset maintains authority in its current composition.

Now, I want to show you a parallel of the great assembly in the New Testament. Because if the great assembly is a picture of the rapture, if its a picture of the gathering together of the saints and the church then there should be some links... the jews who wrote the New Testament knew about this Ezra and Nehemiah assembly.

1. First, Jesus knew that the temple would be destroyed. Then in 1 Corinthians Paul said...

1 Corinthians 3:16 KJV

16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

The body is the temple of the holy spirit...

2. Who organized/started the New Testament church?

Acts 1:15 KJV

15 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,)

The New Testament church was started and organized by the 120 that were gathered in the upper room. This is not a random number...this is the number of people who were in the great assembly (Ezra and Nehemiah).

The apostles held unto the “oral stories” or “oral traditions” of Jesus ministry and what did they do with it? they said this is going to be lost unless we write it down.

So they wrote the gospels and they gave the gospels so that the scriptures would be given to the common man and they could pass them down to their children. So the way that the church was formed (the New Testament Church) is the same way that this group (the great assembly) was formed by Ezra and Nehemiah.

So, the jews in the upper room were paralleling what they knew already existed because they understood this was a new organism in the earth being formed by God.

If you don't like the word *rapture* since it's not in the King James 1611's English translation of the bible...the word *rapture* was in the first 7 English translations of the bible prior to 1611.

If you don't like “gather together in one” or “gathering together” or “caught up together” then call it the “great assembly”. If you don't want to call it those, then call it the “general assembly of the first born”.

Now, we are going to get into the “**general assembly**” or the “**general assembly of the first born**”. There was a great assembly that happened every 7 years among the Jews. Every 7th year there was a great assembly at the Temple Mount area in Jerusalem. This included all the men and women.

A special bema (greek word meaning elevated platform/seat for dignitary/judge) was built in the temple area and when the king arrived he would climb or ascend up to the bema (or platform).

The king was then handed a scroll (*called a Torah Scroll - the New Testament word is Pentateuch*). Then the king would hand it to the synagogue president and he would hand it over to the high priest. The high priest then blessed it and handed it back to the king who then opened up the scroll. He, the King, was the only one who could open it.

So, when the scroll was opened he began to read publicly what was written in the scroll and this is the only time gold trumpets were used.

There are other instruments that were used as well for different events: Shofars were always used during new moons and feast days. Silver trumpets were used during Yom Kippur and the long silver trumpets were used for the calling of the camps and for the journey of Israel out to the wilderness.

However, this is the only time in the history books that you will find a gold trumpet being made and/or blown is at this time - which is the end of the 7th year - a very special gold trumpet.

I'm sure right about now you are asking yourself, "Pastor Grant, what does this have to do with the rapture of the church?" There is a trumpet of God that sounds at the rapture - it says the trump of God, not the trump of the 7th angel. It's not the trumpet of an angel but its a shout of the archangel and its the trumpet of God.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 AMP

13 Now also we would not have you ignorant, brethren, about those who fall asleep [in death], that you may not grieve [for them] as the rest do who have no hope [beyond the grave].

14 For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will also bring with Him through Jesus those who have fallen asleep [in death].

15 For this we declare to you by the Lord's [own] word, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord shall in no way precede [into His presence] or have any advantage at all over those who have previously fallen asleep [in Him in death].

16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a loud cry of summons, with the shout of an archangel, **and with the blast of the trumpet of God.** And those who have departed this life in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we, the living ones who remain [on the earth], shall simultaneously be caught up along with [the resurrected dead] in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so always (through the eternity of the eternities) we shall be with the Lord!

Gods Metal Is Gold

Gold is deity

Silver is redemption

Brass is humanity

The trumpet sounds ***of God***, which makes sense that it will be a gold trumpet (logically speaking). Then, the crowd gathers in the heavenly temple and that's where the Bema Judgement Seat of Christ is, or the Judgement Seat (bema in the greek, for raised platform where the king stood).

What do you see in the book of Revelations? You see Jesus being introduced on the throne room floor as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. That is not His priestly position, a lamb is His priestly position. He (Jesus) suffered as a lamb, bought redemption by His blood. So the lamb represents Him as a priest - the priest offered as a lamb.

But, He is also a King! He is coming back as King of Kings and Lord of Lords and that is why in chapter 5 of Revelations, John says that I saw a lamb but He was a lion of the tribe of judah.

Revelation 5:1-13 KJV

1 And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.

*2 And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, **Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?***

3 And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

4 And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

*5 And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the **Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David**, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the **seven seals** thereof.*

6 And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

7 And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.

8 And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.

9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

12 Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

13 And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

Revelation 5:1-13 Amplified Bible (AMP)

1 And I saw lying on the open hand of Him Who was seated on the throne a scroll (book) written within and on the back, closed and sealed with seven seals;

2 And I saw a strong angel announcing in a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the scroll? And [who is entitled and deserves and is morally fit] to break its seals?

3 And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth [in the realm of the dead, Hades] was able to open the scroll or to take a [single] look at its contents.

4 And I wept audibly and bitterly because no one was found fit to open the scroll or to inspect it.

5 Then one of the elders [of the heavenly Sanhedrin] said to me, Stop weeping! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root (Source) of David, has won (has overcome and conquered)! He can open the scroll and break its seven seals!

6 And there between the throne and the four living creatures (beings) and among the elders [of the heavenly Sanhedrin] I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God [the sevenfold Holy Spirit] Who have been sent [on duty far and wide] into all the earth.

7 He then went and took the scroll from the right hand of Him Who sat on the throne.

8 And when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders [of the heavenly Sanhedrin] prostrated themselves before the Lamb. Each was holding a harp (lute or guitar), and they had golden bowls full of incense (fragrant spices and gums for burning), which are the prayers of God's people (the saints).

9 And [now] they sing a new song, saying, You are worthy to take the scroll and to break the seals that are on it, for You were slain (sacrificed), and with Your blood You purchased men unto God from every tribe and language and people and nation.

10 And You have made them a kingdom (royal race) and priests to our God, and they shall reign [as kings] over the earth!

11 Then I looked, and I heard the voices of many angels on every side of the throne and of the living creatures and the elders [of the heavenly Sanhedrin], and they numbered ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands,

12 Saying in a loud voice, Deserving is the Lamb, Who was sacrificed, to receive all the power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and majesty (glory, splendor) and blessing!

13 And I heard every created thing in heaven and on earth and under the earth [in Hades, the place of departed spirits] and on the sea and all that is in it, crying out together, To Him Who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb be ascribed the blessing and the honor and the majesty (glory, splendor) and the power (might and dominion) forever and ever (through the eternities of the eternities)!

So Jesus, King Jesus, the Lion of Judah, ascends to the platform and just like the Jewish people starting back in the Old Testament, He had to be handed the scrolls (Torah scrolls back then) and the King had to open and read the scroll.

There is going to be a 7 sealed book that they will be wondering who can open it and the King who was the lamb, and is now the Lion is the only one who will be able to open it - King Jesus.

Jesus will be reading the 7 sealed book in front of the congregation of the assembly - **He will be reading all that is within the 7 sealed book.**

We need to understand the culture and times in which the scriptures were written... the bema/platform and the great assembly... only Jesus the King (Lion of Judah) and Jesus the lamb who was slain can open the book in midst of the **Great Assembly.**

Who Is At The General Assembly?

1. **The dead in Christ.**
2. **The living that have been changed from immortal to immortality. (Those caught up in the rapture)**
3. **The angels**
4. **Jesus Christ**
5. **God the Father**

Everyone needs to understand the importance of being caught up prior to the tribulation...tribulation is going to be horrific. The first 42 months although a time of peace in Israel it will be time that many hearts will be callous or grow cold - the spirit has left. Only the 2 witnesses are here on earth.

We also need to know where to find this information in the Word and write it down in our hearts and minds and tell others who do not believe in the Rapture. Tell the saved and unsaved because both groups don't grasp this.

Now, we are going to look in the Old Testament for the Rapture of the Church. Remember scripture defines scripture and confirms it. The Old Testament is pulled through the New Testament.

Some people will say the word “rapture” doesn’t exist in my bible and I know that we went over the greek and the hebrew and what it means and that the 7 English translations before the King James says rapture but, are there any more clues outside of the 4 verses in 4 separate books that I quoted to prove a rapture?

If someone were to ask you this, even though there are 4 passages that are very clear about a gathering together, “being plucked up out of harms way before the tribulation” and “two men will be walking side by side and one will be gone”, what would you say?

Is there any proof or more proof about “a rapture” in the Old Testament?

Yes, now, I want to explain to you the difference between a minor and major prophets in the Old Testament. The Major Prophets and Minor Prophets are terms used in regard to the Old Testament portion of the Bible to distinguish the longer books of prophecy from the shorter ones. The Major Prophets include: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel. The Minor Prophets include Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

We are going to focus on Zephaniah....

Zephaniah - Quick Bio

Zephaniah: Considered to be the Royal Prophet and he is also a Minor Prophet. Zephaniah prophesied about 625 B.C. which makes him a contemporary of Jeremiah. The unusual thing about Zephaniah is his ancestry. He is of the royal line of Judah, and more specifically of the house of David. His great-great grandfather was Hezekiah, one of Judah's most righteous kings. However, when Hezekiah died, it was Zephaniah's great uncle, Manasseh, and not his great grandfather, Amariah, who ascended to the throne.

Manasseh became the most corrupt king of Judah's history, reversing all the gains his father had made and is thought to be the king responsible for putting Isaiah to death.

Here is Zephaniah's prophecy...

Zephaniah 1:18 KJV

18 Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.

Zephaniah 2:1-2 KJV

1 Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired;

2 Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the Lord's anger come upon you.

So, *gather yourselves together before the day of the lord.*

Now, I'm going to give to you the parallel verses in the New Testament that goes with this. This is the Old Testament being pulled through to the New Testament and more revelation and scripture defining and confirming scripture.

1. The Lords wrath

Rev 6:16, 11:18, 14:19

The Lords wrath is mentioned 12 times in the book of Revelation

2. Gather yourselves together

Ephesians 1:10, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, 2 Thessalonians 2:1

3. A Nation undesired (that is the church)

Matthew 21:43

1 Peter 2:9

That nation he is speaking of here is the church if we read the New Testament prophecy.

4. Before the decree bring forth (or is issued)

The decree here is in Daniel 9:27 which is the covenant of contract that the antichrist makes and is also found in Revelation 12:14.

Daniel 9:27 (KJV)

27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

5. Before the day of the Lord's anger

Romans 1:18

Romans 2:8

Ephesians 5:6

1 Thessalonians 1:10

Zephaniah mentions the day of God's wrath, and it is mentioned in Isaiah where the land is destroyed because of God's wrath, which lines up with the book of Revelation.

Zephaniah says that you have to ***gather yourselves together*** and that a nation is going to be involved in this gathering together.

When does that gathering together take place? The Rapture of the Church, before the Tribulation...Paul said that we shall be caught up together, he said that we shall be gathered together, Paul uses those terms for the rapture (*just as a reminder*).

Zephaniah says here, “get together - nation that is not desired” - **the church is the holy nation** (also in Matthew’s gospel) the nation that would bring forth fruit in it’s season because the Jewish people rejected their Messiah.

So, before the decree is issued, **(the decree is Daniel 9:27)** which begins the 7 year tribulation, the decree is issued or before the Lord’s anger!

The first part of the Tribulation (Revelation 6) which is how many months? 42 months That is called the “wrath of the Lamb” and the last 42 months is the “wrath of God”. Before the Lord’s anger, there will be a gathering together...see, when you compare scripture with scripture it is very, very clear.

Listen to what God’s Word says here in Zephaniah 2:3

Zephaniah 2:3 KJV

3 Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger.

Some people say, oh, that just means that we will be preserved during the Tribulation. That is not what it says...we can read about our hiding spot or where we shall be hid during this time...

Isaiah 26:19-21 KJV

*19 **Thy dead men shall live,** together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.*

20 Come, my people, **enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors** about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be over past.

21 For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

Now, this is real interesting and this is the prophet Isaiah talking that **“thy dead men shall live together with my dead body”**. He’s talking about the resurrection of the dead which would later be called in the New Testament as the resurrection of the **“dead in Christ”**.

Now, when he says **enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors**...Revelation 4:1 says

Revelation 4:1-2a (KJV)

1 After this I looked, and, behold, **a door was opened** in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.

2 And immediately I was in the spirit:....

Why is the door important in Revelation 4? Because John is on the Isle of Patmos and **the door** opens and he moves from here (earth) in the spirit to heaven.

More confirmations of “the door” are found here in Matthew 25 this is the parable of the Ten Virgins...

Matthew 25:1-13 KJV

1 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

2 And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

3 They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: 4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.

9 But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. 12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

13 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

Now, in the parable of the virgins it says that the call came and that the bride groom was coming and 5 wives took their lights and torches and went into the chamber and did what? **They shut the door!** The others came knocking on the door but could not get in the door because the 5 who were foolish forgot the oil and the door was closed.

So, lets go back to Isaiah 26...

Isaiah 26:19-21 (KJV)

*19 **Thy dead men shall live**, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.*

*20 Come, my people, enter thou into thy **chambers**, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, **until the indignation be over past**.*

21 For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

Indignation is from the Hebrew word *zaam* which means:

zaam defined: *to froth at the mouth with rage at God's displeasure with human sin. The word indignation is also found in Daniel 11:36 which is dealing with the tribulation.*

Now, what is the chamber? In Judaism when a man and a woman come together and the man comes to get his bride and takes her to his father's house they enter a secret chamber behind the door.

They are under a canopy (*called a huppah*) and that is where the two go to consummate the marriage and they shut the door behind them.

The bible says in Isaiah that we are going to go into a chamber and ours is a heavenly chamber where the groom is and He shuts the door...

We have to stay hidden though, remember back in Zephaniah how to stay hidden? be righteous and meek...

Zephaniah 2:3 (KJV)

*3 Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; **seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger.***

We are told we are to going to be hiding in the chamber until the indignation is passed. So, is this an earthly chamber we can hide in to escape all of this? Does it possibly mean to go hide in the church? Churches get burnt down all the time.

In the last 8 years over 1,150 churches have been burned down to the ground by Muslims in Indonesia alone. All throughout Iraq, Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries churches are being torched to the ground every day.

The prophet isn't talking about a building here on earth - the only safety is in the shadow of the Almighty, the only safety is in the heavenly temple, that is where you are going to be protected from the things that are going to happen in the future.

If you believe that Jesus is coming back you need to live like it. It's not His desire that anyone perish, and He is commanding you and I to go be the light and darkness does not like light.

But, we need to keep telling people He is coming back, remind them He is coming back for a righteous, holy church. We need to live a life that lines up with the Word and not just by how we talk but how we live as well. Word and Deed !

Oh pastor Grant - why do we need to talk about this, are you sure there's a rapture - I don't know if I believe everything you are saying in God's Word is true? Why are you so extreme?

I will stand before God one day and I will not hear the words "Grant why didn't you tell them"? I will stand before God one day and I will hear "well done thy good and faithful servant".

You will stand before God one day and what will you hear? What do you want to hear? What do you need to do in order to hear those words?

Jesus is coming and He will rapture up His Church - will you be ready ?

Matthew 25:23 KJV

23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.