

St. Stephen's Church  
Teaching – David Hughes  
Book of The Revelation of Jesus Christ  
The Seven Vials/Plagues  
Rev. 15:1-16:21

- I. First things. 15:1-8. As of first order, this verse gives us a picture of the raptured saints in heaven.**
- a. They are in heaven. :2
  - b. They are described as having gotten victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name. Yet, they are found in heaven. Therefore, they must have gotten there either
    - i. by Rapture
    - ii. or Death
    - iii. or Martyrdom.
    - iv. The context and words of the verses convey surely that John has in mind both Martyrdom and Rapture. (See Chapter 14:15 and note that it comes before the second reaping, and before the Vials/Plagues = Wrath of God.)
  - c. They sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb. :3-4 (See Ex. 15:1-21)
  - d. :5-8. This is the introduction to the breakdown of Post-Rapture/Post-Tribulation judgments of God, otherwise known as “The Wrath of God.”
- II. Second things: Just how long does the Wrath of God take?**
- a. The reason I ask this is because we know that Jesus Christ will physically come back to set up His kingdom after the wrath of God has been accomplished.
  - b. This coming of Christ to set up His kingdom has always been known as “the Second Coming” of Christ. But, there is a problem in that all of the words used for Jesus’ Second Coming relate to His actual physical coming and not to the Rapture. Added to that is the disdain with which the Pre-Tribulationists are held by the Post-Tribulationists because of their doctrine of a “secret Second Coming” before the real, public Second Coming.
  - c. There appears to be a Rapture or a reaping before the physical Second Coming of Christ.
  - d. This reaping is not before the Tribulation of those days, but after. It is not after the Wrath of God being poured out, but before. And, there appears to have to be some time elapsed between the reaping of the saints (14:15; 15:2) and the Second Coming wherein Jesus will set up His kingdom
- III. Other Rapture Passages**
- a. 1Thes. 4:13-18. “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.

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**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. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words."**

- i. Notice that Paul says in :15 "...unto the coming of the Lord..." This is the word *parousia*. It means a "coming to remain with." It does not say that we will immediately come to the earth to set up God's reign. Paul simply says that after this, we will always be with the LORD. Truly, this is the comfort we seek, and it matters not at all where we will be, so long as we can be with the LORD Jesus.
- ii. It seems to fit Rev. 14:15, as ever after this verse, the saints are seen in heaven.
- iii. It does not indicate here that Jesus continues his descent and actually settles on the earth at the Mt. of Olives in order to begin His earthly reign.
- iv. My guess here is that we, after *surviving alive* (:17) the Tribulation, are caught up to meet the LORD and to remain with Him during the time of the outpouring of His great wrath upon the earth and its inhabitants who have so woefully treated His saints and the earth. Rev. 11:18; 16:5-7.

- IV. The First Vial/Plague. 16:2
- V. The Second Vial/Plague. 16:3
- VI. The Third Vial/Plague. 16:4-7
- VII. The Fourth Vial/Plague. 16:8-9
- VIII. The Fifth Vial/Plague. 16:10-11
- IX. The Sixth Vial/Plague. 16:12-16
- X. The Seventh Vial/Plague. 16:17-21 The introduction of Babylon as a special object of God's wrath. (Actually, Babylon is introduced in Chapter 14.)