

In II Thessalonians 2, it would appear that if the Rapture is to be absolutely imminent, it must occur some time before the "man of lawlessness sets himself up in the temple of God and claim universal worship.

In Revelation 13, it would appear that if the Rapture is to be absolutely imminent, it must occur some time before the first "beast" is revealed in his true character and claim absolute allegiance and universal worship.

If we merge these passages, it would appear that, unless the making of a seven-year treaty with Israel takes place secretly, and the Third Temple is built secretly, and Jewish sacrifice is reinstated secretly and clandestinely (all of which are extremely unlikely!), the Rapture needs to be located prior to the beginning of Daniel's seventieth seven, and prior to the Tribulation period, since the Return of Christ to earth with His saints clearly takes place after the Tribulation period (according to the third section of the Olivet Discourse), then if the Rapture is to be absolutely Imminent, it must take place before Daniel's seventieth seven and before the Tribulation period, and this necessitates an interval between the Rapture aspect of the Second Coming and the Return or Revelation aspect (in this case, a time interval of seven years).

5. A personal view and its implications

The author of this syllabus hereby places himself on record as holding to the position of Imminent Pretribulational Premillennialism. He believes that the Rapture phase of the Second coming is now absolutely imminent and will take place before the Tribulation period, and that the Return or Revelation phase of the Second coming is now relatively Imminent and will take place after the Tribulation period.

At what level of conviction or certitude does the professor hold his position? This necessitates distinguishing between levels of conviction.

At the first level of conviction -- teachings that are clearly stated in Scripture -- the professor would believe that Jesus is definitely coming to earth again.

At the second level of conviction -- teachings that by necessary deduction may be drawn out of Scripture -- the professor would believe that Jesus is coming to earth again to establish His Millennial kingdom of external safety, righteousness, and peace.

At the third level of conviction -- teachings that appear to be implied by the overall "drift" of scriptural teaching -- the professor would believe that Jesus is coming before the Tribulation to catch up His own to Himself, and coming after the Tribulation with His saints to reign on earth.

The professor realizes that saying he holds to a pretribulation view at the third level may seem like a weak position, but he believes it to be the proper stance in view of the evidence.

what are some of the implications of this position for the professor's personal and working relationships with those who differ from him?

As to his personal relationships with those who differ from him, the professor has some fine Christian friends who hold to positions other than imminent pretribulational premillennialism. He and they simply agree to differ. When they engage in discussion about their difference, he and they