

The Rapture

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John 14:1-3

“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.”

marriage vows	— betrothal period groom prepares home for bride	wedding feast Rev 19:6-9
Church = Christ's bride Ephesians 5:32		imminent return of groom Matthew 25:1-13

2

The Rapture 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.

Greek ἀρπάζω *Harpazo*
Latin : *simul rapiemur cum illis in nubibus obviam Christo in aera*
Other uses: Acts 8:39, 2 Cor 12:2-4, Rev 12:15

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We will not all sleep...

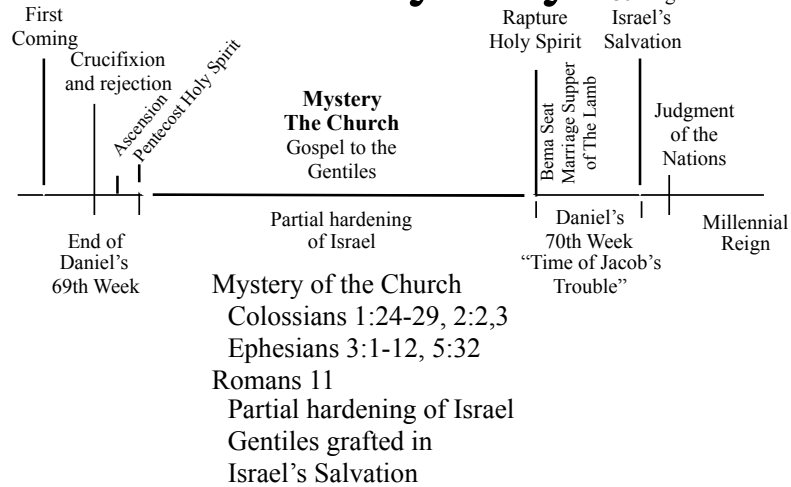
Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.

1 Corinthians 15:51-53

Christ's death and resurrection is of "first importance" (15:3,4)
Christ was raised ⇒ we will be raised
We need new incorruptible bodies
Some will not be resurrected (we will not all sleep), but will be changed instantaneously

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The Mystery



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Dispensationalism

God's interaction with man has differed over time and His revelation to man has progressed over time.

NT vs OT / BC vs AD

Adam to Moses (Rom 5:14), Law of Moses / Grace from Christ (John 1:17)

Mosaic Law as "shadow" to the revealed Christ "reality" (temple view ripped)

"times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24), "last days" (Isa 2, 2 Tim 3:1-5)

Many different interpretive systems, from the simple to the complex, have been formed around "dispensational" divisions of Scripture.

The term "dispensationalism" is generally tied to a specific interpretive system that was made popular by the Scofield Study Bible first published in 1909

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Seven Dispensations of Classic Dispensationalism

Dispensation	Time Period	Judgment
Innocence	From Adam to The Fall	Expulsion
Conscience	From Fall to The Flood	Flood
Government	The Flood to Babel	Disbanded
Promise	From Abraham to Moses	Wilderness
Law	From Moses to Cross	Cross
Grace	From Cross to Rapture	Tribulation
Millennial	Earthly reign of Christ to final rebellion	Earth Destroyed

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Time of Jacob's Trouble

The Tribulation is a time of God's dealing with Israel.

70th week is for Israel and Jerusalem : "Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city..." (Daniel 9:24)

Alas! That day is so great - there is none like it - it is a time of distress for Jacob - yet he shall be saved out of it. (Jer 30:7)

...who can endure the day of His coming ... He is like a refiner's fire ... He will purify the sons of Levi... (Malachi 3:1-3)

Christ's return will bring salvation to Israel (Romans 11:24-27; Zech 12,13);

They will recognize their Messiah as the one whom they pierced (Zech 12:10; John 19:37; Rev 1:7)

"and a there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness" (Zech 13:7-9)

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Churches in Revelation

The Seven Churches are the focus of chapters 2 and 3.

Once John is translated in to heaven in his vision the church is not mentioned again until the epilogue in 22:16.

Purpose of 7 letters : commendations and warnings

Written to 7 historical churches in Asia Minor

Typical churches throughout the world in the whole church age

Foreshadow successive epochs representing the dominant form of the church during those times

Seven Churches Revelation 2,3

Church	Good	Bad	Progression
Ephesus	Patient endurance, does not tolerate evil	Left their first love	I will come
Smyrna	Endures persecution		
Pergamos	Holds fast to Jesus' name	Teaching of Balaam, sexual immor., idolatry	I will come
Thyatira	Love, faith, service	Tolerate false teaching, sexual immor., idolatry	hold fast until I come
Sardis	Believing remnant	Dead	I will come like a thief
Philadelphia	Open door, kept word		I am coming soon
Laodicea		Lukewarm, apostate	I stand at the door and knock

Revelation 4:1 "Come up here"

Imminence

Christ can return (*i.e.*, the rapture can occur) at any moment.

The rapture of the church is the next event on the prophetic calendar — there are no intervening signs or events.

Impossible if the Tribulation must occur first.

Scripture appeals for us to be in expectation of His return
Romans 13:1,12; 1 Corinthians 7,8; Philippians 3:20,21; Titus 2:11-13; James 5:8-9; Hebrews 10:35-37; 1 John 2:28; Revelation 3:10; 22:17-22

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Seven Seals	White Horse Antichrist 6:1,2	Red Horse War 6:3,4	Black Horse Famine 6:5,6	Pale Horse Death 6:7,8	Martyrs under altar 6:9-11	Cosmic Chaos 6:12-16	Golden Censer 8:1-5	
					Three Woes			
Seven Trumpets	Hail, Fire, Blood 1/3 earth burned 8:6,7	Burning Mountain 1/3 sea dead 8:8,9	Blazing Star 1/3 water bitter 8:10,11	Darkness 1/3 sun, moon, stars out 8:12	Demonic Locusts from Abyss 9:1-11	4 Angels 2M Troops 1/3 man dead 11:1-14	Kingdom Claimed! lightning, quakes, hail 11:15-19	
	Satan and Demons cast to earth — Israel flees to wilderness (ch 12) Rise of Beast and False Prophet — Abomination / Image, Worship of Beast (ch 13) 144,000 Redeemed Sing (14:1-5), Three Angel Messengers (14:6-20)							
Great Tribulation	Seven Bowls of Wrath	1 Painful Sores those who received mark 16:2	2 Sea to Blood all sea dead! 16:3	3 Rivers to Blood 16:4-6	4 Sun Scorches with Fire 16:8	5 Darkness on Kingdom of Beast 16:10,11	6 Euphrates Dried Kings fr. East Demon Frogs 16:12-14	7 Lightning Great Earthquake 100 lb hail 16:17-21
						Armageddon 16:15	Return of Christ Final Battle 19:11-21	

Rapture Theories

Pre Tribulation Rapture (Dispensational Premillennialism)

Partial Rapture

only those “*watching and waiting*” Luke 21:36, Hebrews 9:28, 2 Timothy 4:8

Post Tribulation Rapture (Historic Premillennialism?)

Mid Tribulation Rapture

Pre Wrath Rapture

Many others...

Post Tribulation Rapture (Historic Premillennialism?)

Papias of Hierapolis (60 -153 AD) : Disciple of John! Companion of Polycarp (Bishop of Smyrna).

Writings are lost but we have quotations from Eusibeus (260 - 340 AD) and Irenaeus.

Eusibeus chastises (in his writings) Papias for being a *chiliast* who “appears to have been of very little understanding”

Justin Martyr (100 - 165 AD)

Generally believed that they equated the first resurrection of Rev 20 with the events of 1 Cor 15 and 1 Thess 4

Irenaeus (130 - 202 AD) : studied under Polycarp

Resurrection of just and destruction of wicked occur when Christ returns when he ends the 3.5 year reign of Antichrist in Jerusalem.

Thus ends the 6th thousand year

Literal millennial kingdom follows — 7th thousand years = millennial sabbath

General resurrection follows the millennial kingdom.

Church is spiritual Israel (Gal 3:7, Rom 9:6-8)

Irenaeus indicates a pre-trip rapture: “*And therefore, when in the end the Church shall be suddenly caught up from this, it is said, ‘There shall be tribulation such as has not been since the beginning, neither shall be’*” (Against Heresies V.XXIX.1)

Historic Premillennialism Eschatological Calendar

Rise of Anti-Christ and persecution of the Church

The Great Tribulation

The return of Christ at the end of the age

The resurrection of the just and the rapture of living saints

The conversion of Jews

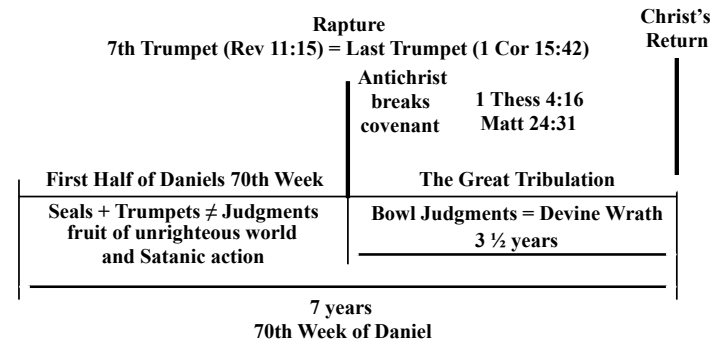
The millennial kingdom (who populates the kingdom?)

The final revolt at the end of the millennium

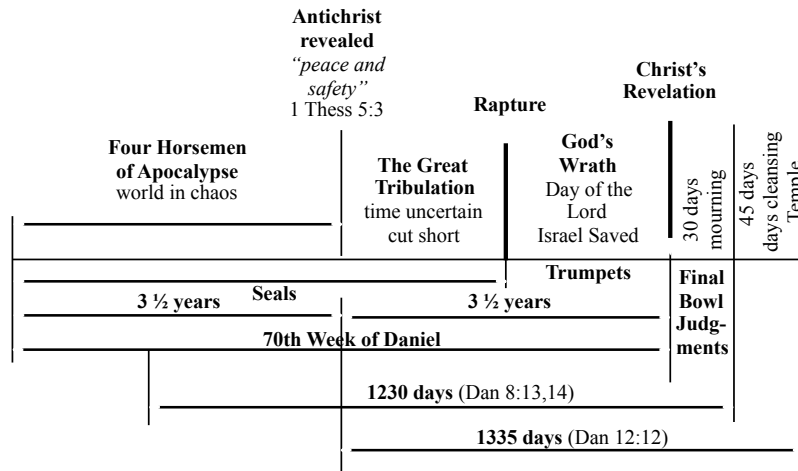
Resurrection of wicked and the final judgment

The eternal state in the new heavens and new earth

Mid Tribulation Rapture

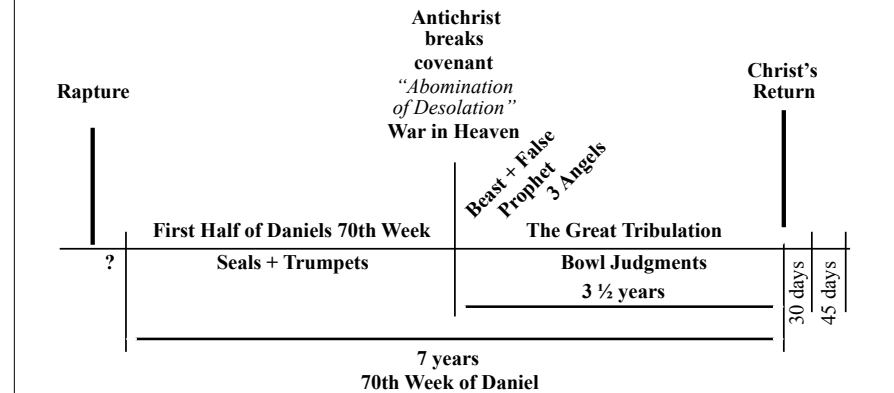


Pre Wrath Tribulation Rapture



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Pre Tribulation Rapture



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Events must soon take place?

"The revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place" Revelation 1:1

"... the Lord ... has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place. And behold, I am coming soon." Revelation 22:6,7a

"... the coming of the Lord is at hand ... the Judge is standing at the door." James 5:7-11

"... it is the last hour" (1 Jn 2:18), "The end of all things is at hand" (1 Pet 4:7)

"Yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay" (Hebrews 10:37; quoting Isaiah 10:25; 26:20; Habakkuk 2:3,4; Haggai 2:6)

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Problems

"If the Revelation doesn't deal with events that were about to happen 2,000 years ago, why did God so emphatically say that it deals with events that were about to happen shortly after the book was written?"

If the events of Revelation are a "worldwide judgment" how could they have been fulfilled in a local judgment in Jerusalem 2,000 years ago?

"earth" is referenced over 60 times in Revelation

"Jerusalem" is trampled for 42 months and is often the center of judgment (Rev 11), yet most of the events are on a global scale.

"... every eye will see him, ... and all tribes of the earth will wait on account of him." (Rev 1:7)

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Next week...

Reading and meditation assignment

Ezekiel 36-48

Why a new temple?

Why sacrifices? How does this fit with Hebrews 10?

Who is “the prince?”