


THE RAPTURE
What and When? – Part 37




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The Rapture
Course Overview


- I. What is the Rapture?
- II. When is the Rapture?
- III. Strengthening the Pre-Tribulational case
- IV. The opposing views
- V. One second after the Rapture




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What is the Rapture? 

1. An important doctrine
2. Distinct from the Second Advent
3. Catching away of all living believers (1 Thess 4:17)
4. Reunion (1 Thess 4:14-16)
5. Resurrection (1 Cor 15:50-54)
6. Exemption from death (1 Cor 15:51, 54-56)
7. Instantaneous (1 Cor 15:52)
8. Mystery (1 Cor 15:51)
9. Imminent (1 Cor 15:51; 1 Thess 4:15)
10. Traditional doctrine now being recovered

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When is the Rapture?
7 Arguments Favoring the Pre-Tribulation View

1. Tribulation's purpose concerns Israel (Jer 30:7; Dan 9:24)
2. No biblical reference to the church on earth during the Tribulation period (Rev 4-22)
3. Church is promised an exemption from divine wrath (1 Thess 1:10; 5:9; Rom 5:9; Rev 3:10; 6:17)
4. Rapture is imminent (1 Cor 15:51; 1 Thess 4:15)
5. Rapture is a comfort (1 Thess 4:18)
6. Antichrist cannot come to power until the restrainer is removed (2 Thess 2:6-7)
7. Symbolic parallels (2 Peter 2:5-9)

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Strengthening the Pre-Tribulation Case


- 1. John 14:1-4
- 2. Revelation 3:10
- 3. First Thessalonians 4-5
- 4. Second Thessalonians 2:3a
- 5. Matthew 24-25



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When Will the Rapture Take Place Relative to the Tribulation Period?

- Pre-tribulation rapture theory
- Mid-tribulation rapture theory
- Post-tribulation rapture theory
- Pre-wrath rapture theory
- Partial rapture theory



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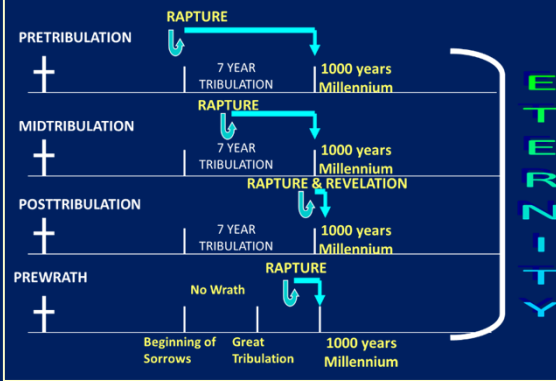
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RAPTURE VIEW COMPARISON



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Post-tribulation Rapture Theory

1. According to 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and 1 Corinthians 15:52, the rapture will take place at the sounding of the last trumpet which, according to Matthew 24:30-31, will take place upon Christ's return at the end of the Tribulation period.
2. The Rapture is found in Revelation 19:11-21.
3. According to Revelation 20:4-6, the resurrection of all believers will transpire at the end of the Tribulation period thereby necessitating that the rapture will also take place at this time.

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Post-tribulation Rapture Theory

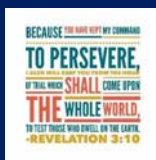
4. Although the church is exempted from God's wrath, the church will be on the earth during the entire Tribulation period because the Book of Revelation portrays God's people being supernaturally protected from many of the apocalyptic judgments during this time period.
5. The post-tribulation rapture position has been the dominant view held by theologians throughout the history of the church.

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Protection Through the Tribulation?

(Revelation 3:10)


- 1) Like the protection in Goshen (Exod. 8:22, 24; 9:4, 6; 11:4-7; Rev. 9:4; 16:2)
- 2) Effective? Rev. 6:9-11; 7:13-14; 13:10, 15; 20:4




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Revelation 3:10

“Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour [hōra] of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.”



16




Charles Ryrie

What You Should Know About the Rapture, Current Christian Issues (Chicago: Moody, 1981), 116-17.

“However, the promise of Revelation 3:10 not only guarantees being kept from the trials of the Tribulation period but being kept from the time period of the Tribulation. The promise is not, I will keep you from the trials. It is I will keep you from the hour of the trials...But how clear and plain is the promise. ‘I...will keep you from the hour of testing.’ Not just from any persecution, but from the coming time that will affect the whole earth. (The only way to escape worldwide trouble is not to be on the earth.) And not just from the events, but from the time. And the only way to escape the time when the events take place is not to be in a place where time ticks on. The only place that meets those qualifications is heaven.”

17



Ron Rhodes

The End Times in Chronological Order: A Complete Overview to Understanding Bible Prophecy (Eugene, OR: Harvest, 2012), 50.

“The posttribulational view, expressed in the writings of George Eldon Ladd, Robert Gundry, and others, is the view that Christ will rapture the church after the tribulation period at the second coming of Christ. This means the church will go through the time of judgment prophesied in the book of Revelation, but believers will be kept from Satan's wrath during the tribulation (Revelation 3:10). Pretribulationists (such as myself) respond, however, that Revelation 3:10 indicates that believers will be saved out of or separated from (Greek: ek) the actual time period of the tribulation.”

18



Norman Geisler

Systematic Theology, vol. 4
(Minneapolis, MN: Bethany, 2004), 654.

“In context, the statement about being saved 'out of' (Gk: ek) the time of trial does mean saved from it (not through it). One cannot be saved from an entire hour by being in any part of it.”



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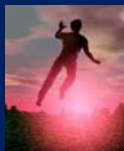
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George Eldon Ladd

The Blessed Hope (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956), 31.


According to posttribulationist George Ladd, "every church father who deals with the subject expects the church to suffer at the hands of the Antichrist" and "the prevailing view is post-tribulationist premillennialism."




21

 **Robert H. Gundry**
The Church and the Tribulation (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973), 173.

Gundry similarly concludes, "Until Augustine in the fourth century, the early Church generally held to the premillennarian understanding of Biblical eschatology...And it was post-tribulational."



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Post-tribulationalism's Appeal to Antiquity?

A. First, the issue is not when the view became popular but if it is taught in the Bible.

B. Second, the notion that the earliest Church Fathers were universally post-tribulational is a highly debatable proposition.

C. Third, prophetic truth is designed by the Holy Spirit to become progressively more understandable as the world approaches the allotted time period when the prophecies will be fulfilled.

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25

Martin Luther

Quoted by F.W. Farrar, *History of Interpretation* (NY: E.P. Dutton and Company, 1886), 327.



"I ask for the Scripture, and Eck offers me the Fathers. I ask for the sun, and he shows me his lanterns. I ask, 'where is your Scripture proof?' and he adduces Ambrose and Cyril...With all due respect to the Fathers, I prefer the authority of Scripture."

26

The Five Solas (Alone or By Itself)

- *Solus Christus* – Christ alone
- *Sola Fide* – faith alone
- *Sola Gratia* – grace alone
- *Sola Scriptura* – Scripture alone
- *Soli Deo Gloria* – To the glory of God alone



27

J. Dwight Pentecost

Things to Come, Page 168

“If the same line of reasoning were followed one would not accept the doctrine of justification by faith, for it was not clearly taught until the Reformation. The failure to discern the teaching of Scripture does not nullify that teaching.”



28

Acts 20:29

“For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.” (Italics added).



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Things to Come, Page 168

“The early church lived in the light of the belief in the imminent return of Christ. Their expectation was that Christ might return at any time. Pre-tribulationism is the only position consistent with this doctrine of imminence.”



31

Jesse Forest Silver

The Lord's Return: Seen in History and in Scripture as Premillennial and Imminent (NY: Revell, 1914), 62-64.

Silver says of the apostolic fathers that **“they expected the return of the Lord in their day...They believed the time was imminent because the Lord had taught them to live in a watchful attitude.”** Concerning the ante Nicene fathers, he says: “by tradition they knew the faith of the apostles. **They taught the doctrine of the imminent and pre-millennial return of the Lord.”**

32

Second Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians 4.15.

(A.D. 95–140)

“Wherefore let us every hour expect the kingdom of God in love and righteousness; because we know not the day of God's appearing.”



33

Didache 16.1.
(A.D. 120)

“Watch for your life's sake. Let not your lamps be quenched, nor your loins unloosed; but be ready, for you know not the hour in which our Lord will come.”



34

Epistle of Barnabas 21.
(A.D. 70–135)

“For the day is at hand on which all things shall perish with the evil [one]. The Lord is near, and His reward.”



35

Pseudo Ephraem
(4th-6th century A.D.)

“Why therefore do we not reject every care of earthly actions and prepare ourselves for the meeting of the Lord Christ, so that he may draw us from the confusion, which overwhelms all the world...For all the saints and the elect of God are gathered, prior to the tribulation that is to come, and are taken to the Lord lest they see the confusion that is to overwhelm the world because of our sins.”

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"The Rapture" a Traditional Doctrine Now Being Recovered

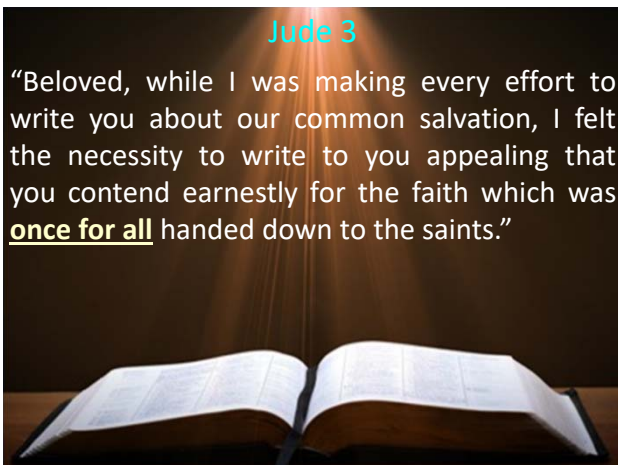
- Sola scriptura
- Negative influence of Augustine and Origen
- Pseudo Ephraem (4th-6th century A.D.)
- Progressive illumination



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Jude 3

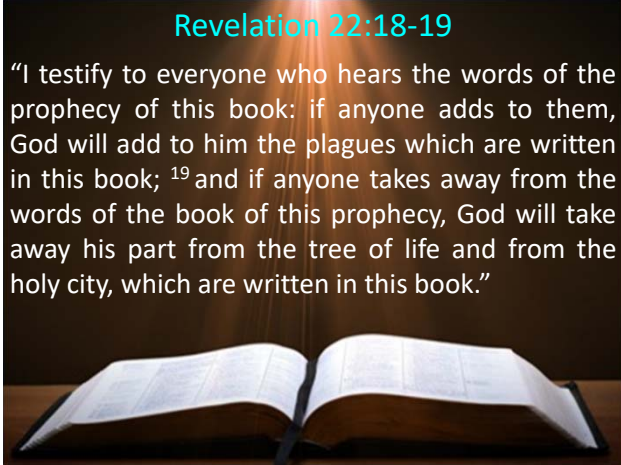
"Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints."



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Revelation 22:18-19

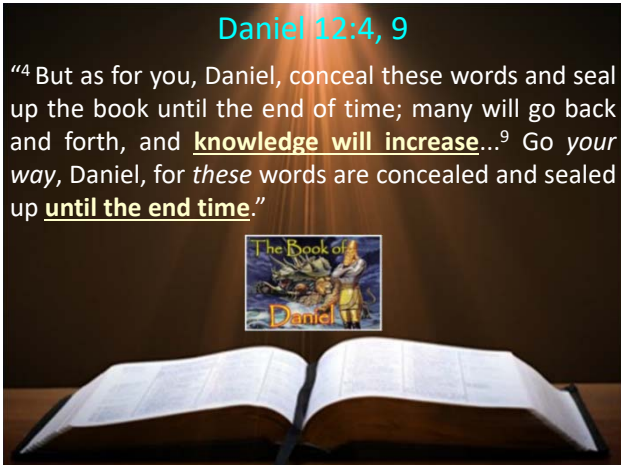
“I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; ¹⁹and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.”



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Daniel 12:4, 9

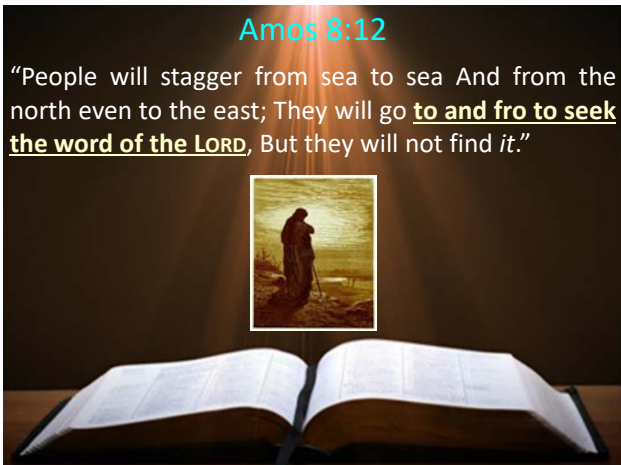
“⁴ But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time; many will go back and forth, and **knowledge will increase**...⁹ Go *your way*, Daniel, for *these* words are concealed and sealed up **until the end time**.”



41

Amos 8:12


“People will stagger from sea to sea And from the north even to the east; They will go **to and fro to seek the word of the LORD**, But they will not find *it*.”



42

Sir Isaac Newton
(1642–1727)

"About the time of the end, a body of men will be raised up who will turn their attention to the Prophecies, and insist upon their literal interpretation, in the midst of much clamor and opposition."


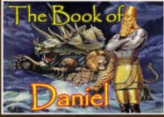


Isaac Newton cited in Nathaniel West, *The Thousand Years in Both Testaments*, 462.

43

Daniel 8:27


"Then I, Daniel, was exhausted and sick for days. Then I got up again and carried on the king's business; but I was astounded at the vision, and there was none to explain it."



44

1 Peter 1:10-11

¹⁰ As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that *would come* to you made careful searches and inquiries, ¹¹ seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.



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History of Doctrine

- Canon (A.D. 180)
- Christology (A.D. 500)
- Atonement (A.D. 1100)
- Salvation (A.D. 1500)
- Eschatology (A.D. 1800)

46

James Orr

The Progress of Dogma (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952), 21-31.

Orr outlines the progress of Christian dogma in a similar way. "The second century was the age of Apologetics. The doctrine of God and especially the Trinity then took center stage in the third and fourth centuries as the Church dealt with the Monarchian, Arian, and Macedonian controversies. Anthropology then became the Church's focus in the early fifth century during the Augustinian and Pelagian controversies...The late fifth and then sixth and seventh centuries were characterized by an ecclesiastical interest in Christological (Nestorian, Eutychian, Monophysite, Monothelite) matters. In the . . .

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James Orr

The Progress of Dogma (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952), 21-31.

". . .sixteenth century the reformers focused upon salvific or Soteriological concerns. Finally, the Church gave itself to correcting a Mythical and Mediaeval pre-reformation Eschatology." **Thus, Eschatology was the last of the branches of theology to be systematized since it was not designed to be progressively unsealed or illuminated by the Holy Spirit until just before the fulfillment of the predicted events (Dan. 12:4, 8-9).**


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Conclusion

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When Will the Rapture Take Place Relative to the Tribulation Period?

- Pre-tribulation rapture theory
- Mid-tribulation rapture theory
- **Post-tribulation rapture theory**
- Pre-wrath rapture theory
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