

September 20, 2023

# Christ The Rock Church

Questions?

Eschatology is only  
divisive if you let it be

Almost all Christians agree on these three things:

- 1) There is coming a time of great tribulation such as the world has never seen,
- 2) After the Tribulation, Christ will return to establish His kingdom on earth,
- 3) There will be a Rapture—a “catching away” from mortality to immortality—for believers as described in John 14:1-3, 1 Corinthians 15:51-52, and 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17. The only question regards the timing of the Rapture: when will it occur in relation to the Tribulation and the Second Coming?

Revelation Chapter 4

The Harpazo

## **Revelation 4:1-2**

**After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things.” Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne.**

# God's Prophetic Calendar

“Come up here” – removal – from here to where?

“**after these things**” (what things?)

Remember Revelation 1:19 - Therefore write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place **after these things**.

# Define Your Terms

Rapture: English

Harpazo: Greek

Rapio: Latin



**Where in the world are we?**

## Last Week

Judgment is Coming (what form)

Rom. 2:5-9; Acts 17:30-31

God Delivers His People (how)

**Last Week**

Paul from Acts 17

This week Peter's turn  
(2 Peter 2:1-9)

## 2 Peter 2:1-9

1. But false prophets also appeared among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.

## 2 Peter 2:1-9

<sup>2</sup> Many will follow their indecent behavior, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned; <sup>3</sup> and in *their* greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

## 2 Peter 2:1-9

<sup>4</sup> For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, held for judgment; <sup>5</sup> and did not spare the ancient world, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven

## 2 Peter 2:1-9

others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly

<sup>6</sup> and *if* He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing *them* to ashes, having made them an of what is coming for the ungodly

<sup>7</sup> and *if* He rescued righteous Lot, *who*

## 2 Peter 2:1-9

*who was* oppressed by the perverted conduct of unscrupulous people <sup>8</sup> (for by what he saw and heard *that* righteous man, while living among them, felt his righteous soul tormented day after day by their lawless deeds), <sup>9</sup> *then* the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from a trial, and



## 2 Peter 2:1-9

to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment,<sup>10</sup> and especially those who indulge the flesh in *its* corrupt passion, and despise authority.

# God's Judgment - Deliverance

Adam/Eve: Genesis 3 – **Promised a Redeemer**

Worldwide Flood: Genesis 7 – **Provided a family**

Peoples at Babel: Genesis 11 – **provided a nation**

Sodom/Gomorrah: Genesis 19 – **Snatched Lot out**

Egypt/gods of: Exodus 7 – (**No deliverance**)

Babylonian Captivity: 2 Chronicles 36 -- **Regathered**

Jesus on the Cross: -- **Resurrection**

Tribulation Judgment: Revelation 6-16 -- **None**

# **What is the Tribulation**

Greek: 'thlipsis'

'tribulation, affliction,  
trouble, anguish'

# **Length of the Tribulation**

**Length: 7 Years**

**“Great Tribulation”: 3-1/2**

**Begins with 1'st Seal Judgment**

**Ends with Armageddon**

# **Titles of the Tribulation**

# **Names of . . .**

Jacob's Trouble

70<sup>th</sup> Week of Daniel

Jehovah's 'strange work'

The indignation

The overflowing scourge

The Day of Vengeance



Names of . . .

The day of recompense

The Time of Trouble

The Day of Wrath

Day of Distress

Day of Desolation

# Old Testament Names of Tribulation

The day of Darkness, gloominess,  
thick clouds

Day of Trumpet Blast, Battle Cry, alarm

The Hour of Judgment

Day of the Lord

## Old Testament Verses

Jer. 30:7; Dan. 9:27; Is. 28:21;  
Obad. 12-14; Deut. 4:30; Is.  
26:20; Dan. 11:36; Is. 28:15, 18;  
Is. 34:8; 35:4; 61:2;  
**Zeph. 1:15-16**; Joel 2:2

# New Testament Verses

Matt. 24:29

I Thess. 1:10; 2:22; 5:2

Revelation 3:10; 6:16-17; 7:14; 11:18;  
14:10, 19; 15:1-7, 16:1

# New Testament Names of Tribulation

2 Peter 2:4-9; 3:3-7 – The Day of Judgment

Romans 2:5; Rev. 6:17 – Day of Wrath  
(God's righteous judgment)

# **God's Purpose for Tribulation**

1. Make an end of wickedness and  
wicked ones

2. Worldwide Revival

3. Restore His People Israel

# Reason #1: God's Character is at Stake

God is a God of Justice

Isaiah 26:9 – For when the earth experiences  
Your judgments The inhabitants of the world  
learn righteousness.

Acts 17:31 – because He has fixed a day in which He will  
judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He  
has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by  
raising Him from the dead."

Jesus breaks the seals and initiates the judgments



## Reason #2: Revival

Rev. 6:9-11 – When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. They cried out with a loud voice, “O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.

## Reason #2: Revival

Rev. 7:13-14 – Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, “Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?” I said to him, “Sir, you know.” And he said to me, “These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

## Reason #3: Israel

Hosea 5:15 – I will go away and return to My place Until they acknowledge their guilt align with AntiChrist) and seek My face; In their affliction they will earnestly seek Me.

– Cycle of O.T. Israel (Judges, Kings, prophets)  
(Act 7:51)

## Reason #3: Israel

Ezekiel 20:33-44 – with wrath poured out I will enter into judgment with you *in the wilderness*

Zechariah 12:10 – "*I will pour out* on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the *Spirit of grace and of supplication*, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.

## Reason #3: Restoration of Israel

Rev. 7 – witnesses to the world

Amos 9:11-15 – restored land, fortunes

Romans 11:25; (9:25) – gifts and calling

Isaiah 45:17, 45 – ultimate salvation

# What is the Rapture

## **Rapture – Second Not The Same**

The rapture and second coming are similar but separate events. Both involve Jesus returning. Both are end-times events. However, it is crucially important to recognize the differences. In summary, the rapture is the return of Christ in the clouds to remove all believers from the earth before the time of God's wrath. The second coming is the return of Christ to the earth to bring the tribulation to an end and to defeat the Antichrist and his evil world empire.

# Pictures of the Rapture in Scripture



# Seven “Raptures” but One 'Type' in scripture”

Enoch – Gen 5:42; Heb 11:5; Jude 14 (delivered prior to the judgment of the flood)

Elijah – 2 Kgs 2:1, 11 (caught up only to return one day?)

Jesus – Mk 16:19; Acts 1:9-11; Rev 12:5 (bodily resurrection prior to removal)

Philip – Acts 8:39 (Greek 'harpazo' used here – after his mission was accomplished, he was caught up)

Paul – 2 Cor 12:2-4 (caught up to the throne room, saw and heard just like Isaiah and John – seeing the future promise fulfilled strengthened him)

Church: The Body of Christ – 1 Thess. 4:17 (delivered from “the wrath” to come)

John Rev – 4:1-2 (literally and bodily caught up)

# Distinctions

## Distinctions – 1 Corinthians 10:32

**Israel:** Gifts and calling of God are without repentance (Romans 11:1, 25-29)

The **Church:** Gates of hell shall not overcome (Matt. 16:18), never pictured on Earth after chapter 3.

**Tribulation Saints:** Satan DOES overcome them (Daniel 7:21, 25; Rev. 13:7), beheaded, no flesh would survive (Matthew 24:21-22)

## Distinctions – 1 Corinthians 10:32

The '**Earth-dwellers**: Never repent

**O.T. Saints**: resurrected after Tribulation

Israel: the wife of Jehovah: Is. 54:5; 62:4, Hosea 2:2

The Church: the Bride of Christ: Eph. 5:25-27; Rev. 19

# Rapture Theories

Partial Rapture

Pre-Tribulation Rapture

Mid-Tribulation Rapture

Post-Tribulation Rapture

## Partial Rapture

Only faithful Christians will be taken in the rapture, with unfaithful Christians left on earth to suffer through the tribulation

**Matthew 25** -- five virgins whose lamps did not have any oil - symbolic of believers being left behind???  
No, it is describing unbelievers being left behind.

The biggest objection to this theory . . .

## Partial Rapture

**The church is referred to as ‘The Bride’ of Christ and The Body of Christ. A bride is ‘One’. A ‘body’ is One. We are ONE. How can ‘One’ be divided.**

**No – ALL are taken because we are all ONE! (Partial Rapture ruins the typology)**

## Mid-Tribulation Rapture

Midtribulationism: the rapture occurs at the midpoint of the tribulation. The seventh trumpet sounds (Revelation 11:15), the church will meet Christ in the air, and then the bowl judgments are poured upon the earth (Revelation 15—16) in a time known as the great tribulation. The rapture and Christ's second coming (to set up His kingdom) are separated by three and a half years.



# Mid-Tribulation Rapture

## 2 Thessalonians 2:1–3

The order of events is as follows:

- 1) apostasy,
- 2) the revelation of the Antichrist,
- 3) the day of Christ. Antichrist will not be decisively revealed until “the abomination that causes desolation” (Matthew 24:15)

## Mid-Tribulation Rapture

Midtribulationists use Daniel 7:25, which says the Antichrist will have power over the “saints” for three and a half years, to bolster their point—they assume this is the first half of the tribulation and that the saints spoken of are the church.

## Mid-Tribulation Rapture

Trumpet of 1 Corinthians 15:52 is the same trumpet mentioned in Revelation 11:15. The trumpet of Revelation 11 is the final in a series of trumpets; therefore, it makes sense that it would be “the last trumpet” of 1 Corinthians 15.

# Mid-Tribulation Rapture Problems

Trumpet of 1 Corinthians 15:52 is the same trumpet mentioned  
in Revelation 11:15

This logic fails due the trumpets' objectives. The trumpet that sounds at the rapture is a call to worship ("the trumpet call of God" - 1 Thessalonians 4:16), but the one in Revelation 11 is a call to war/judgment. One trumpet is a call of grace to God's elect; the other is a pronouncement of doom on the wicked.

Further, the seventh trumpet in Revelation is not the "last" trumpet chronologically—Matthew 24:31 speaks of a later trumpet that sounds at the commencement of Christ's kingdom.

# Mid-Tribulation Rapture

## Problems:

Midtribulationism places the rapture in Revelation 11, prior to the start of the great tribulation. There are two problems with this placement in the chronology of Revelation. First, the only occurrence of the term “great tribulation” in the entire book of Revelation is in 7:14, before the opening of the seventh seal. Second, the only reference to a “great day of wrath” is in Revelation 6:17, during the events of the sixth seal. Both of these references come too early for a midtribulation rapture, which is timed according to the seventh trumpet.

# Mid-Tribulation Rapture

## Problems:

Matthew 24:36 -- Day and hour knows no man.

- Daniel set the day of Jesus' return as being exactly 1,290 days after the abomination of desolation (Dan. 12:11).
- In this, there is a dilemma. How can the day of Jesus' coming be both completely unknown, and at the same time be known to the day according to Dan. 12:11?

# Mid-Tribulation Rapture

## Problems:

Daniel 7:25 – Beast overcoming “the saints” means the church but the ‘church’ was a “mystery” until N.T.

# Mid-Tribulation Rapture

## Problems:

Mid-Tribulationists have said to me, “but how could “we” (the church) abandon Israel.

Answer: Israel is not “ours”. She is Jehovah’s and He is going to deal with her as He sees fit.



# Mid-Tribulation Rapture

## Problems:

Mid-Tribulationists have said to me, “God is going to “refine His Bride” in the first half of the mid-tribulation.

Answer: sanctification, justification, glorification. In God’s eyes you are positionally ‘complete’. The rest is a matter of rewards.

## Post-Tribulation Rapture

Posttribulationism teaches that the Rapture occurs at the end, or near the end, of the Tribulation. At that time, the church will meet Christ in the air and then return to earth for the beginning of Christ's Kingdom on earth. The Rapture and Christ's Second Coming (to set up His Kingdom) happen almost simultaneously.

## Post-Tribulation Rapture

According to this view, the church goes through the entire seven-year Tribulation.

Roman Catholicism, Greek Orthodoxy, and many Protestant denominations believe and teach a posttribulation view of the Rapture.

# Post-Tribulation Rapture

## Problems:

Denial of Distinctions: Israel vs. Church

Denial of Imminence: any time now

Denial of nature and purpose of Tribulation

Denial difference Rapture vs. Second-Coming

## Post-Tribulation Rapture

They will tell you the 'Pre-Tribulation' Rapture Theory is a 'new' doctrine invented by the 'Plymouth Brethren' (John Darby).

## Post-Tribulation Rapture

Answer: 1<sup>st</sup> Century saints believed in imminent return – only consistent with Pre-Trib Rapture theory.

Quotations from the Early Church Fathers:

## Irenaeus (AD 130 to 202)

In *Against Heresies*, Book 5, Chapter 29, Irenaeus wrote this about Jesus' return for his church: "And therefore, when in the end the *Church shall be suddenly caught up from this*, it is said, '[then] There shall be tribulation such as has not been since the beginning, neither shall be.'" "

## Post-Tribulation Rapture

Pre-trib rapture just promotes escapism:  
'why should we not have to suffer'

a. the church has suffered

b. we are promised to escape suffering

1. 1 Thess. 5:9

2. Luke 21:36 – “you can escape”

3. Rev. 3:10 – you shall escape



## Titus 2:13 – our blessed hope

- Believers are taught to expect the Savior from heaven at any moment (Phil 3:20; Titus 2:13; Heb 9:28; 1 Thess 1:10; 4:18; 5:6; Rev 22:20).
- Expresses hope and a spirit of expectancy (1 Thess 1:10).
- Should result in us consciously living a righteous and holy life (1 John 3:2,3).

## Titus 2:13 – our blessed hope

- Paul included himself among those looking for Christ's return (1 Thess 4:15,17; 2 Thess 2:1).
- Timothy was admonished to “keep this commandment without spot, unbreakable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Tim 6:14).
- Jewish converts were reminded that “yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry” (Heb 10:37). “Occupy until I come” (Lk 19:13).

## Titus 2:13 – our blessed hope

- “Occupy until I come” (Lk 19:13).
- The expectation of some were so strong that they had stopped work and had to be exhorted: to return to their jobs (2 Thess 3:10-12); and have patience (James 5:8).

## So what ...

Expect the Lord to return tonight

Plan your life for the next 70 years

Be (being) filled with the Spirit

Share the gospel

Make disciples

Don't fear but remember your blessed hope.

# **Next Week**

## **Questions**

**Pre-Tribulation Rapture**

**Typology of the Bride**

**Who are the 24 Elders (why are they important)**

**Is the Holy Spirit Removed at the Rapture?**