



REVELATION

THE RAPTURE | David Chadwick | February 11, 2024

Revelation 4:1: “After this...”.

After what? After the birth of the church (Acts 2). After the seven churches of Revelation (Revelation chapters 2-3), then comes the rapture of the church.

Review of Daniel 9:24-27

1. 69 weeks / 483 years from when Jerusalem was reestablished after the Captivity
2. Jerusalem was reestablished in 444 B.C. (Nehemiah 1 gives exact date)
3. 483 years / 69 weeks from that date takes you to Jesus’s Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem
4. Jesus weeps over Jerusalem’s rejection of him, knowing its destruction in 70 AD
5. There is still a 7th week / 7-year time period from Daniel not yet fulfilled
6. This 7-year time period is the Great Tribulation: God’s wrath on all sin
7. And God’s judgment upon the Jews / Israel
8. The church / Christians will be raptured before this Great Tribulation

Where does this idea come from?

1. **John 14:1-3** - a Jewish wedding feast
*“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. **2** 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? **3** 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.*
2. **1 Thessalonians 4:13** - *But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.*

- Spiritual Gifts
- Trials and Tribulations
- Israel
- The Rapture

3. **1 Thessalonians 4:14-18** - *For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. **15** For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. **16** For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. **17** 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. **18** Therefore encourage one another with these words.*
4. **1 Corinthians 15:50-52** - Michael Crichton and Jurassic Park
*I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. **51** Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, **52** in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.*

Other biblical examples of harpazo/rapture before God's judgment

1. Enoch (Noah's grandfather) - Genesis 4
2. Noah and the Flood - Genesis 6-8
3. Lot and Sodom - Genesis 19
4. Elijah - 2 Kings 2
5. Philip - Acts 8
6. Paul - 2 Corinthians 12
7. Jesus - Acts 1:11
8. The Church - 1 Thessalonians 4

Do all Christians agree upon a rapture before the Great Tribulation? No...

1. Pre-tribulation
2. Mid-tribulation
3. Prewrath tribulation
4. Post tribulation

For many, the Rapture and Second Coming are the same thing - are they? I think they are two different events. Why?

Rapture/Second Coming

1. **Rapture:** Christians meet Jesus in the air. **Second Coming:** Christians meet him on earth
2. **Rapture:** is signless (think a thief in the night). **Second Coming:** has many signs (Jesus in Matthew 24, Luke 21, Mark 13; Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2, etc)
3. **Rapture:** Mount of Olives is intact. **Second Coming:** it's split in two.
4. **Rapture:** Jesus comes for his Bride. **Second Coming:** for Israel.
5. **Rapture:** Jesus comes for his church. **Second Coming:** Jesus comes with his church.
6. **Rapture:** Jesus comes with no angels. **Second Coming:** he comes with angels.
7. **Rapture:** only the church sees him. **Second Coming:** all see him.
8. **Rapture:** the earth is not judged. **Second Coming:** the earth is judged.
9. **Rapture:** has a party (Wedding Feast). **Second Coming:** has a judgment.
10. **Rapture:** has no Satan. **Second Coming:** features Satan (and the antichrist and false prophet).

Criticisms of the rapture:

1. **It's a late invention from the 1800's.** Not true: from Barnabas (100 AD) to Papias (60-130 AD) to Justin Martyr (110-195 AD) to Irenaeus (120-202 AD), to Tertullian (145-200 AD), to Hippolytus (185-236 AD), to Cyprian (200-250 AD), to Lactantius (260-330 AD) ALL believed in IMMINENCE (the belief that Jesus could return any moment) which is central to the pre-tribulation rapture view.

2. **It's Escape Theology** (largely coming from an amillennialist view held by Roman Catholics, mainline Protestants, some called "dominionists" - a group of Christians that seek to institute a nation governed by Christians and based on their understandings of biblical law.)
3. **The source:** Augustine and the Christianized Rome - he interpreted Scripture allegorically versus literally - and the millennium allegorically - especially with a) Israel / Jerusalem / the temple in Jerusalem destroyed by 70 AD and b) a Roman government / leaders who wouldn't want to hear about Jesus squashing kings and rulers
4. **May 14, 1948 and the formation of Israel:** the super sign made many rethink eschatology and replacement theology (that the church has replaced Israel in eschatology)
5. **Daniel 12:4:** Knowledge about the rapture, Second Coming, and End Times has increased
But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase."

I hold to a pre-tribulation rapture. The more I study and don't spiritualize or allegorize the Bible (unless obvious), this is where I've landed. Am I wrong? Somebody is and somebody isn't right in many different areas of theology and practice. My major reason is found in these verses::

- **1 Thessalonians 1:10** - *and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.*
- **1 Thessalonians 5:9** - *For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,*
- **Romans 8:1** - *There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*
- **Revelation 3:10** - *Because you have kept my word about patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth.*

These verses ALL show: God did not appoint Christians and the church for his wrath, the Great Tribulation. But poured out his wrath on his Son for those who believe in him so that we will never experience his wrath.

Moreover, when a nation goes to war, it vacates its ambassadors first. We are ambassadors for Christ:

- **2 Corinthians 5:20** - *Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.*

When God declares war on sin, the devil, and this world, his ambassadors will be vacated first in the rapture.

Two final thoughts:

1. Differences are held by Christ-centered men and women who will spend eternity together
2. In the essentials, unity; in the nonessentials, liberty; but in all things, charity

The most important question today: What about you personally?

Reread John 14:1-6 - *“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. **2** 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? **3** 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. **4** And you know the way to where I am going.” **5** Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” **6** Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*

1. Believe in Jesus today. He is the only way to the Father.
2. Be a part of his Bride, the church
3. Practice hustle theology, not escape theology (two minutes left in the game)
4. Practice IMMINENCE (faithful Christians have been for 2,000 years)

Next week: Revelation 4: “After this...” a glimpse of glory. A peek into heaven. You don't want to miss it!