

# Building A Case For The Pre-Trib Rapture

Lesson #33 Final Questions & Closing Statements

Sept. 14, 2022

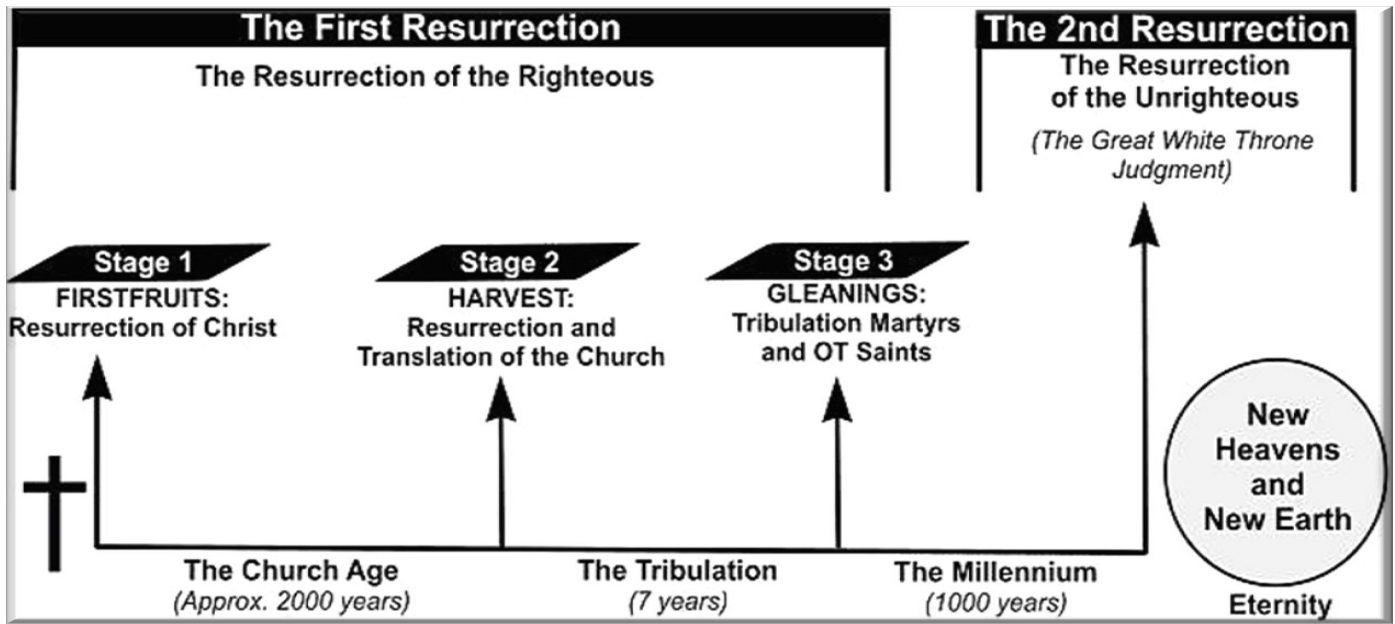
## 3 Stages Of The First Resurrection

I Cor. 15:20-23 But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that slept. <sup>21</sup> For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

<sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. <sup>23</sup> But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

The 1<sup>st</sup> resurrection has 3 stages.

1. First Fruits: Resurrection of Jesus Christ
2. The Harvest: Rapture = resurrection & translation of all believers since Day of Pentecost = Birth of the Church [I Thess. 4:13-5:3]
3. Gleanings: Resurrection of OT saints Dan. 12:1-2  
Resurrection of Tribulation Saints Rev. 20:4-6



Matt. 27:45 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.

➤ Noon - 3:00 pm > Total darkness

Matthew 27:50-53 And Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up His spirit. And behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from top to bottom; and the earth did quake and the rocks were split.

And the graves were opened, and many [not all] bodies of the saints which slept arose. And coming out of the graves after His resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared to many.

Bible Knowledge Commentary: For those present on the day Jesus died, there were at least four major signs that screamed loudly: Jesus was not any ordinary man. He was God.

1. An Unusual Darkness

This was discussed by secular historians who attempted to determine how this could have occurred. They state the darkness occurred in the middle of the day. [noon -3:00 PM] Passover, which always occurs at full moon, had started. A solar eclipse cannot occur during a full moon. What happened was a miracle with no scientific explanation.

2. The temple veil which was 4" thick was torn from the top to the bottom.

This curtain separated the holy place from the holy of holies in the temple [Heb. 9:2-3]. The fact this occurred from top to bottom signified: God is the One who ripped the thick curtain showing that the way of access into His presence was now available for everyone, not simply the Old Testament high priest [Heb. 4:14-16; 10:19-22].

3. An earthquake occurred.

4. And the graves were opened, and many [not all] bodies of the saints which slept arose. And coming out of the graves after His resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared to many.

The tombs of many righteous people who were under the old covenant were opened.

Heb. 8:6-9:28 reveals that Jesus' death and resurrection instituted a new covenant.

John MacArthur: They received their glorified bodies when Jesus was resurrected.

The passage clearly states these saints came out of their tombs after Jesus was resurrected.

Important comment: I Cor. 15:20 Christ was the first fruits of those who had fallen asleep.

➤ These saints could not have been resurrected before Christ.

Conclusion: The tombs were opened after Jesus' death. Then as Matt. 27:53 states, these Old Testament saints were resurrected after Jesus was resurrected.

Matt. 27:54 Now the centurion, and those who were with him keeping guard over Jesus, when they saw the earthquake and the things that were happening, became very frightened and said, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

His resurrection declared to all the world that Jesus the Christ was the Son of God; He is God! Now we are waiting for Him to return. We have the assurance that since He was raised, when He returns, He has the power to raise all believers from the dead to live with Him eternally.

Walvoord: This event was "a fulfillment of the Feast of the Firstfruits of harvest mentioned in Leviticus 23:10-14. As a token of the coming harvest, the people would bring a handful of grain to the priest. The resurrection of these saints, occurring after Jesus Himself was raised, is a token of the coming harvest when all the saints will be raised"

This was a partial celebration and a foretaste of the final resurrection of all the Old Testament saints prophesied by Daniel 12:2, and the New Testament saints at the time of the rapture [I Thess. 4:16].

Dan. 12:1-2 Implies that Old Testament believers will be joined to their resurrected bodies at the end of the tribulation period when Jesus returns to earth to set up His millennial kingdom. [John MacArthur & many other conservative commentators]

Dan. 12:1 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which stands for the children of THY PEOPLE: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time THY PEOPLE shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.

At that time: He has been discussing in Daniel 11:36-45 the time of the Antichrist who is the consummate and worst oppressor of Israel.

- At the time when everything is the worst, the time of Jacob's trouble when the Antichrist attempts to slaughter all of Israel, when he desecrates the temple, at that time, HOPE will dawn. [John MacArthur]
- The promise of deliverance and the promise of salvation is for those who believe.
- The delivered one-third is understood as the remnant of believing redeemed Jews.

Dan. 12:2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

- The angel says to Daniel, the climax to the tribulation is resurrection. [MacArthur]
- He is referring to ISRAEL in this passage. THY PEOPLE

MacArthur: Daniel does not see a thousand years in between because the whole concept was a mystery to him. The whole flow of redemptive history had some big gaps for the OT prophets. Peter says they looked into what they wrote to see what it really meant because they didn't have the full range of revelation. Daniel says there's a resurrection to life and a resurrection to shame and contempt. In Revelation we see they're a thousand years apart.

Dan. 12:2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, [1000 year gap] and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

When will the Tribulation Saints be resurrected?

Rev. 20:4b and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. Tribulation Saints

Rev. 20:5-6 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

Note: The resurrection of the tribulation saints completes the 1<sup>st</sup> resurrection which is separated from the 2<sup>nd</sup> resurrection by 1000 years which is the Millennial Kingdom.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Resurrection is the final resurrection. It is for all non-Christians [Rev. 20:11-14]

- It is a resurrection to the Lake of Fire.

## The Marriage Supper Of The Lamb

Rev. 19:7-8 Let us be glad and rejoice and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. <sup>8</sup> And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

<sup>9</sup> And He saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.

- Wedding guests will be called to the marriage supper of the Lamb, and those who are called will be blessed. [clearly has a forward look anticipating a future time.]

I believe the sequence of future events to occur after the Judgment Seat of Christ are:

1. The *Wedding Ceremony, Marriage of the Lamb*, will occur in the Father's house in heaven.
2. This event is followed by Christ's return to earth with His wife. [Rev. 19:7 ff]
3. The *Marriage Feast, Marriage Supper of The Lamb*, which will be held on *earth* with many in attendance just as the Millennium begins.

The Marriage Supper includes:

- "the friends of the Groom" [John the Baptist; John 3:28-30 and other OT saints] who are not resurrected until after His Second Coming [Dan. 12:1-2].
- Tribulation saints > both mortal and resurrected ones [Rev. 20:4]
- The believing remnant of Israel?

Fruchtenbaum: It seems the marriage feast begins the Millennium or the Messianic Kingdom; the Church's co-reigning with the Messiah will start with a tremendous marriage feast.

T. Ice: There are some New Testament passages that speak of Christ eating and banqueting in the kingdom which strongly imply the celebration of the marriage supper of the Lamb commences in the millennial kingdom.

Matt. 8:11-12 And I say to you, that many shall come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. This is a picture of the redeemed of the ages [Adam to John the Baptist] sitting down with Christ in the kingdom and enjoying a meal together. These are likely the invited guest spoken of in Rev. 19:9, since they are redeemed human beings from the ages who are not part of the church, the Bride of Christ. There will be guests at the marriage supper of the Lamb who will celebrate the marriage of the 2<sup>nd</sup> person of the Trinity to His bride- the church.

Luke 13:28-29 There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.

<sup>29</sup> And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

Thomas Ice: The statements made by Jesus in this passage have some parallels to the things He said in Matthew 8:11. This is in the context of Christ rebuking the Jewish leaders of His day who were advocating rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus to the nation.

The leaders of Israel at this time thought they were in league with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the prophets. In reality, they were opposed to their message by not recognizing Jesus as their long-promised Messiah. Therefore, others will come from the four-corners of the world and experience the fellowship of the kingdom. This dining with the Messiah will likely commence with the celebration that will take place at the marriage supper of the Lamb in His Kingdom.

Does my view and belief about the Rapture matter? Is it important I know & understand whether I hold a pre-trib, mid-trib, or post-trib view?

I believe the Rapture takes place before the Tribulation because it's called the Blessed Hope. Titus 2:13: Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ;

In I Thess. 4:18 the Apostle Paul writes this regarding the imminence of the Rapture . . .

Therefore comfort one another with these words. If the Rapture doesn't occur until the middle or end of the Tribulation, where's the comfort in that?

Pretend you'd never heard of the Rapture. I tell you about the horrors of the Tribulation, all the death and destruction that will take place as foretold in the Book of Revelation; the plagues, pestilence, famine, drought, economic and social upheaval on a scale never seen in history. A third of the earth's population will be wiped out, then later another fourth! I briefly chronicle the rise of the antichrist and false prophet and finally, the Battle of Armageddon, earth's worst and bloodiest war. Then I say, "But comfort one another, cause when it's all over, we'll be caught up to meet the Lord in the air." You'd think I was nuts! There's no comfort in knowing you must endure all of that to get to the Rapture. The only comfort you could gain was by hoping the Last Days were a long way off and that the return of Jesus was nowhere near. That attitude is contrary to Scripture. The comfort of the Blessed Hope (Rapture) comes from knowing it comes before the hour of trial coming upon the whole Earth.

God's Wrath: The Tribulation is a time of God's wrath being poured out on the "earth-dwellers." Rev. 6:15-17 And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; <sup>16</sup> And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: <sup>17</sup> For the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

Yet I Thess. 5:9-11 For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

Those who've been born again are not appointed to God's wrath yet that is precisely what the Tribulation is - the hour [time-period] of God's wrath, testing the hearts of the earth-dwellers. God's wrath against sin was fully satisfied in the Cross of Jesus Christ. When Jesus declared, "It is finished" He meant the holy demands of God's justice were completely satisfied. Jesus took our place on the Cross as the object of God's wrath.

### *Church at Thyatira: The Tolerant Church*

Jesus rebuked the church for allowing a gross moral and spiritual polluter to remain among them. Rev. 2:20-22 Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

<sup>21</sup> And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.

<sup>22</sup> Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds.

If the Rapture occurred after the Tribulation, this wouldn't make any sense. The Rapture occurs before the Tribulation and will sort out the genuine believers from those who are mere professors. Genuine believers will repent, and so be delivered from Great Tribulation.

### *The Epistles Contain No Preparatory Warnings of an Impending Tribulation for Church-Age Believers*

God's instructions to the church through the epistles contain a variety of warnings, but never do they warn believers to prepare for entering and enduring the tribulation of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.

- Gabriel told Daniel this period was for Daniel's people & the holy city of Jerusalem.
- They warn vigorously about coming error and false prophets. [I John 4:1-3]

Acts 20:29-30 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. <sup>30</sup> Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

II Pet. 2:1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

Jude 1:4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

- They warn against ungodly living. Eph. 4:25-5:7

I Thess. 4:3-8 For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; <sup>4</sup> that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, <sup>5</sup> not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; <sup>6</sup> and that no one violate the rights and take advantage of his brother or sister in the matter, because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we also told you previously and solemnly warned you.

<sup>7</sup> For God has not called us for impurity, but in sanctification. <sup>8</sup> Therefore, the one who rejects *this* is not rejecting man, but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you.

Heb. 12:1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

- They admonish believers to endure in the midst of present tribulation.

I Thess. 2:13-14 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. <sup>14</sup> For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews:

II Thess. 1:4 So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:

I Peter 2:20-21 For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God. <sup>21</sup> For you have been called for this purpose, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you would follow in His steps, [NASB]

I Pet. 4:12-16 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though something strange were happening to you; <sup>13</sup> but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that at the revelation of His glory you may also rejoice and be overjoyed. <sup>14</sup> If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory, and of God, rests upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. <sup>15</sup> Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; <sup>16</sup> but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name. [NASB]

- However, there is absolute silence on preparing the church for any kind of tribulation like that found in Revelation 6-18.

It is incongruous that the Scriptures would be silent about such a traumatic change for the church. If any time of the rapture other than pretribulation rapture were true, one would expect the epistles to teach the reality of the church in the tribulation, the purpose of the church in the tribulation, and the conduct of the church in the tribulation.

However, there is no teaching whatsoever. Only a pretribulation rapture explains this silence.

Consider: The Bible seems to connect a direct link between prophetic passiveness and personal peril. Paul, who had a brief time with the young church at Thessalonica, was concerned they might become asleep or lukewarm. To prevent this, he taught them prophecy.

Acts 17:1-2 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures,

Paul received word: Apostate teachings had entered the young Thessalonian church, heresies which conflicted with what he'd taught them.

He followed that visit up with his letters of I & II Thessalonians.

II Thess. 2:1-2, 5 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, <sup>2</sup> That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

<sup>5</sup>Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

- The Thessalonian church was new in its faith and organization.
- Paul didn't have much time with them, but he emphasized the message of prophecy.
- Paul specifically taught them about Christ's Second Advent, about the Antichrist, about the Rapture, and about the Great Tribulation.
- Paul did all this to protect and nourish this young church.

Consider: It seems Paul's antidote for "not sleeping as the others do" was to teach Bible prophecy. The doctrines surrounding Christ's return equip believers against falling prey to cultural deceptions. These specific Biblical truths are there - among other reasons - to keep believers alert and awake.

Consider: The teaching of and belief in the Pre-Trib Rapture has fallen out of favor in these end times. Is there a link between this truth and the church of Laodicea, the last of the 7 churches? They are apathetic and lukewarm. They have no interest in prophecy. Jesus Christ is sick and says He will spew them out of His mouth.

Renald Showers: Maranatha The fact that the glorified, holy Son of God could step through the door of heaven at any moment is intended by God to be the most pressing, incessant motivation for holy living and aggressive ministry and the greatest cure for lethargy and apathy. It should make a major difference in every Christian's values, actions, priorities and goals.

I John 3:3 Everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Our Blessed Hope of Jesus Christ & The Rapture should:

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| ➤ Urge a watchfulness for Christ Himself   | I Cor. 15:58                             |
| ➤ Encourage faithfulness in church leaders | II Tim. 4:1-5                            |
| ➤ Result in expectation and looking        | Phil. 3:20; Titus 2:13; Heb. 9:28        |
| ➤ To promote godly moderation              | Phil. 4:5                                |
| ➤ To excite "heavenly-mindedness"          | Col. 3:1-4                               |
| ➤ To experience comfort                    | I Thess. 4:18                            |
| ➤ To urge steadfastness                    | II Thess. 2:1-2; I Tim. 6:14; I Pet. 5:4 |
| ➤ Encourage patient waiting                | I Thess. 1:10                            |
| ➤ To bring forth successful labor          | I Thess. 2:19-20                         |
| ➤ To infuse diligence and activity         | II Tim. 4:1-8                            |
| ➤ To promote mortification of the flesh    | Col. 3:4-5; Titus 2:12-13                |
| ➤ To require soberness                     | I Thess. 5:6; I Peter 1:13               |
| ➤ To contribute to an abiding with Christ  | I John 2:28; 3:2                         |
| ➤ To support patience under trial          | James 5:7-8                              |
| ➤ To enforce obedience                     | II Tim. 2:3                              |



My belief that there will be a Pre-Tribulation Rapture of the Church stands on the bedrock of the following foundational tenets: [Statements by Nathan Jones of Christ In Prophecy]

#### A. The Bible is the Word of God

The 66-book canon called the Bible is God's inerrant, infallible message to mankind, explaining His purposes and plans for the ages.

II Tim. 3:16-17 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

<sup>17</sup> That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

II Peter 1:20-21 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. <sup>21</sup> For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

- No other document can be reliably trusted, nor remotely reach the bar for the requirements of authentication that the Bible attains to so easily.

#### B. The Bible Is To Be Interpreted Literally.

God means what He says and says what He means. God wants His creations to know His will plainly. While God does indulge in picturesque descriptions and parables, an explanation almost always follows or context is provided for explanation. Spiritualization of text, therefore, has no proper place in interpreting Scriptures. Any eschatological viewpoint must then be thrown out if it is based on the reader's desire to spiritualize the Bible into whatever ethereal meaning they desire. Take the Bible for its plain sense meaning.

#### C. The Church and Israel Are Separate Entities

Israel is not the Church and the Church is not Israel God's promises to Israel as a people and nation are not the same as for the Bride of Christ, the Church.

#### D. A Literal 1000-Year Millennium

The Greek word "chilias" for "one thousand" appears six times in Revelation 20, clearly marking the time period as having 1000 literal years. The purpose of this time period is for Jesus Christ to have an earthly kingdom from which to base His rule and to fulfill His promises

Gen. 13:14-17; 15:5,18-21; II Sam. 7:16-19; Isa. 10:21-22; 11:1-2; Jer. 23:5-8; 30:22; 31:31-34; Ezek. 11:18-20; 34:24; 36:24-28; Mic. 7:19-20; Hos. 3:5; Rom. 11:26-29

#### E. A Literal 7-Year Tribulation

God has purposed to pour out His wrath upon the evil of the world, to regather Israel back into its land, to force Israel to acknowledge Jesus as their Messiah, and for the Messiah to return and fight for His believing remnant. Deut. 4:26-31; Isa. 13:6-13; 17:4-11

Jer. 30:4-11; Ezek. 20:33-38; Dan. 9:27; 12:1; Zech. 14:1-4; Matt. 24:9-31.

The 7 years begin with a covenant between Israel and the Antichrist [Dan. 9:27].

The 7 years is described in a variety of ways:

- as "one seven" year block Dan. 9:27
- consisting of two "times, time and half a time"  
two years + 1 year + half a year; Rev. 12:14, or
- two "1260 days" periods Rev. 11:3
- or two "42 month" periods Rev. 11:2; 13:5

## F. Jesus Will Return Again to Earth

The Bible says Jesus will physically return again to earth

Zech. 14:1-21; Matt. 24:29-31; Mark 13:24-27; Lk. 21:25-27; Rev. 19

Jesus returns to defeat His enemies, set up His throne, restore Israel, rule with "a rod of iron" and share His authority with those who overcame in Him

Matt. 19:28; 25:31; Acts 1:3-6; Rev. 2:26-27; 3:21

## G. The Bible Teaches About a Rapture

I Thess. 4:17 speaks of an event called "the Rapture", Latin "rapio," Greek "harpazo," which means "to catch up, to snatch away, or to take out." "

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

I believe the Pre-tribulation view best harmonizes the apparent discrepancies between rapture and Second Coming passages, best resolves the tension between the imminence and the signs of Christ's coming, best accounts for the protection from divine wrath promised to the church, and best solves the problem of populating the millennium.

The pretribulation Rapture is not just wishful "pie-in-the-sky, in the bye and-bye" thinking. Rather, it is vitally connected to Christian living in the "nasty here-and-now."

*Maranatha* means "the Lord is coming" or "come, O Lord." The early church faced under Roman rule. They were required to declare that Caesar was god. They knew there is only one God and one Lord—Jesus Christ. In all good conscience they could not call Caesar "Lord."

The Romans looked upon them as traitors, persecuted them, and put them to death.

Living under those adverse conditions, the believers' morale was lifted by the hope of the coming of the Lord. No wonder the early church coined a unique greeting of "Maranatha!" which reflected the primacy of the Blessed Hope as a very real presence in their everyday lives.

They were constantly reminded that the Lord is coming [Luke 21:28; Rev. 22:12].

Today, believers in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ live our lives in the light of the knowledge that He can come at any time. We are to be ready when the call comes.

Every day we should expect Him to come. Every day we should long for Him to come.

*Maranatha* reminds us to keep our eyes on the eternal things of the Spirit.

To dwell on material things is to be in constant mental turmoil.

Looking down, we see the earth; looking around, we see earthly things.

But looking up, we see the hope of the soon coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

To those who are discouraged today, *Maranatha!*

To those who are worried today, *Maranatha!*

To those who are filled with anxiety over the problems they are facing, *Maranatha!*

Our Lord is coming!