

“End Times Study: The Rapture”

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Scripture

John 14:1-3

“Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. "If I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.**”

Last Week

We looked at the government in the future, specifically during the Tribulation

We saw that believers were living during the Tribulation and some saints were killed

This Week

If saints are alive during the Tribulation, what about the Rapture? -> The Basic questions

Revelation 7:9-15

“After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." And all the angels were standing around the throne and round the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, "Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen."

13Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "**These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?**" I said to him, "My lord, you know." And he said to me, "**These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**" For this reason, they are before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them."

Matthew 24:15-22

“Therefore, when you see the **ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION** which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place let the reader understand, then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. "Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house. "Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak. "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! "But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath. "**For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will.**" Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; **but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short.**”

Daniel 9:27

“And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.”

The Abomination of Desolation occurs at the middle of the 7-year period

3½ into the Tribulation, the Elect are still there -> Saints are still there

What is the Rapture?

rap·ture (ˈrapCHər/) noun

(according to some millenarian teaching) the transporting of believers to heaven at the Second Coming of Christ.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

“But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until **the coming of the Lord**, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.

For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain **will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air**, and so we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.”

So, we see that the word Rapture is not a term used in the Bible but the Thessalonians obviously had a question that was bothering them.

False teachers had been coming around this young church while Paul and Timothy were away and telling them that they had missed the Lord’s Second Coming. And, worse than that, their friends who had died would not be around for the Lord’s Second Coming party.

Paul must have heard word of these concerns through messages coming to him from other disciples of Christ and sought to ease the Thessalonian concerns.

A Discussion of End Times Passages

We have a number of biblical passages to consider when looking at the Rapture

1 Thessalonians 5:9

“**For God has not destined us for wrath**, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.”

Daniel 7:25 (speaking of the Antichrist)

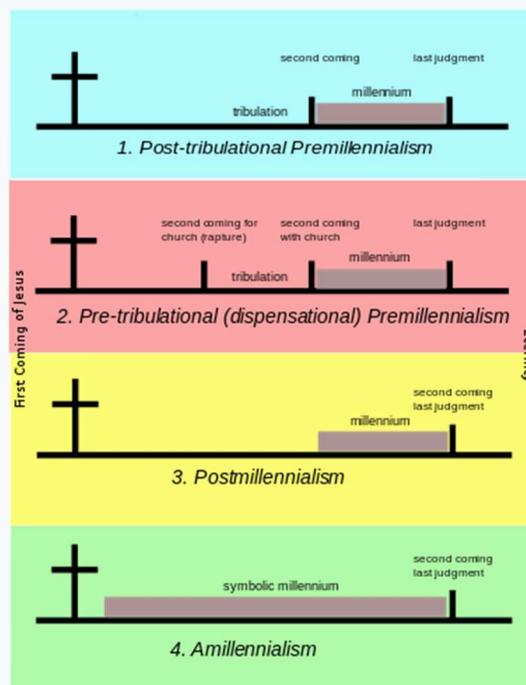
“He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.”

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 and the Words of Christ in Matthew 24:37-40

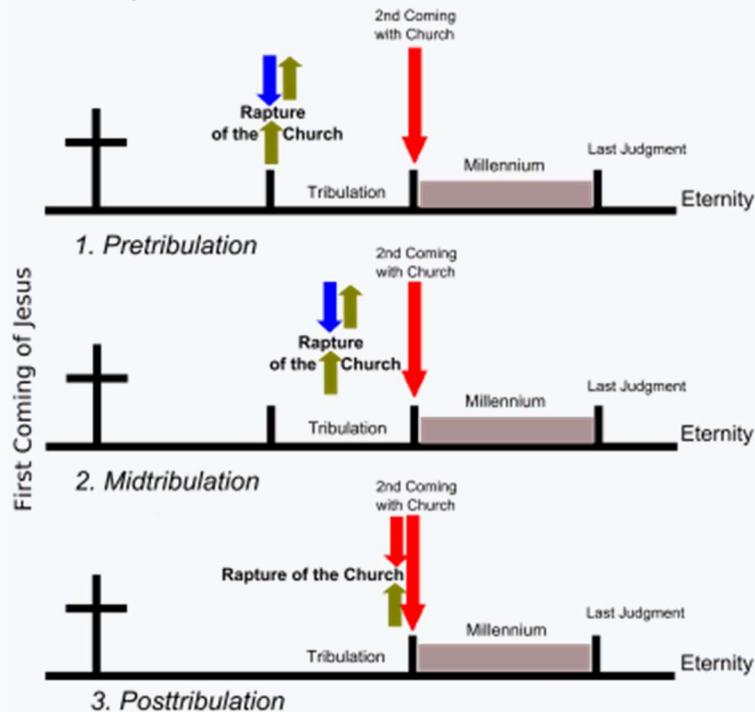
According to **1 Thessalonians 4:16-17** and **Matthew 24:37-40** the rapture would occur in the Parousia of the Lord where the Greek "Parousia" is used to describe the events:

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 ASV	Matthew 24:37-40 NIV
<p>¹⁵ According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord (παρουσίαν Parousia), will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.</p>	<p>³⁷ As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming (παρουσία Parousia) of the Son of Man. ³⁸For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; ³⁹and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming (παρουσία Parousia) of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left.</p>

Comparison of Christian millennial teachings



Comparison of Christian Tribulation Views



Comparison of differing viewpoints amongst premillennialists about timing of tribulation.

In the Amillennial and Postmillennial views there are no distinctions in the timing of the rapture. These views regard the rapture, as it is described in 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 would be identical to the second coming of Jesus as described in Matthew 24:29-31 after a symbolic millennium.

In the premillennial view, the rapture would be before a literal millennium. Within the premillennialism the pre-tribulation position is the predominant view that distinguishes between the rapture and second coming as two different events. There are also other positions within premillennialism that differ with regard to the timing of the rapture.

Jesus's View of the Rapture?

John 14:1-3

"Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come again and receive you to Myself, that **where I am, there you may be also.**"**

The end of John 13, the disciples were told that Jesus is going away

He has said that many times over the last 3 years, but they didn't want to hear it

Jesus said Peter was influenced by Satan in disparaging Jesus for saying that would happen

Jesus wants to comfort the disciples

He tells them to believe in Him

"In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you"

Jesus will prepare a place for the disciples in Heaven

There's going to be lots of room in Heaven

If that were not the case, Jesus would have mentioned that

"If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also"

Jesus promises to come again

The question is, "When does this occur?" on the timeline

Is it an individual receiving or a group receiving?

John 14:4-5

"And you know the way where I am going." Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?"

Must be a group receiving -> a large event

So that the disciples will be with Him forever

Other passages about Christ's return:

Acts 1:9-11 (On Mount Olivet)

"And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. They also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? **This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven."**

Marriage Supper of the Lamb

Revelation 19:7-9

"Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready." It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, "Write, **Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb."**

Again, the question is when does this occur?

Definitely seems like the "where" is up in Heaven

Second Coming of Christ

Revelation 19:11-16

“I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and true, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh, He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”

These events seem to be predecessor and successor events in Revelation 19

So, what are we left with about the Rapture?

We know that the event will happen

We know that the event is a group event

We do not know when that event will happen

We know that there is a Marriage Supper of the Lamb which precedes Christ's return in glory

Next week, prayer and praise night, but Rapture – Part 2 coming the week after

Prayer

Benediction