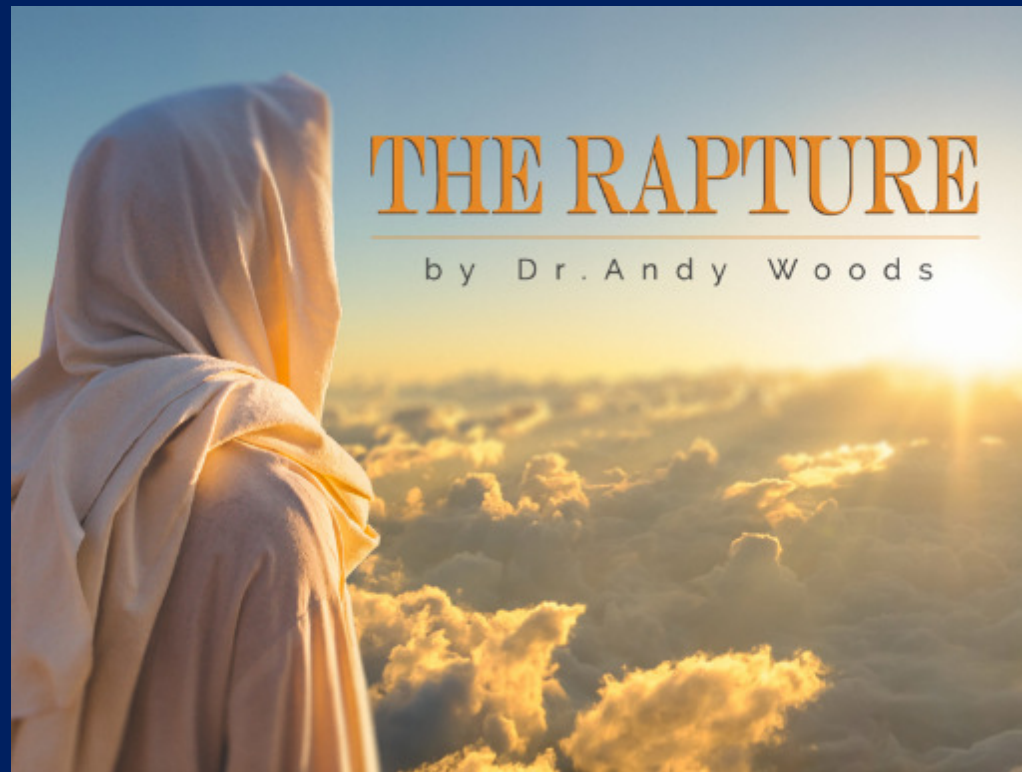


# THE RAPTURE

What and When? – Part 35



Andrew Marshall Woods, Th.M., J.D., Ph.D.  
Sr. Pastor, Sugar Land Bible Church

# 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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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)
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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

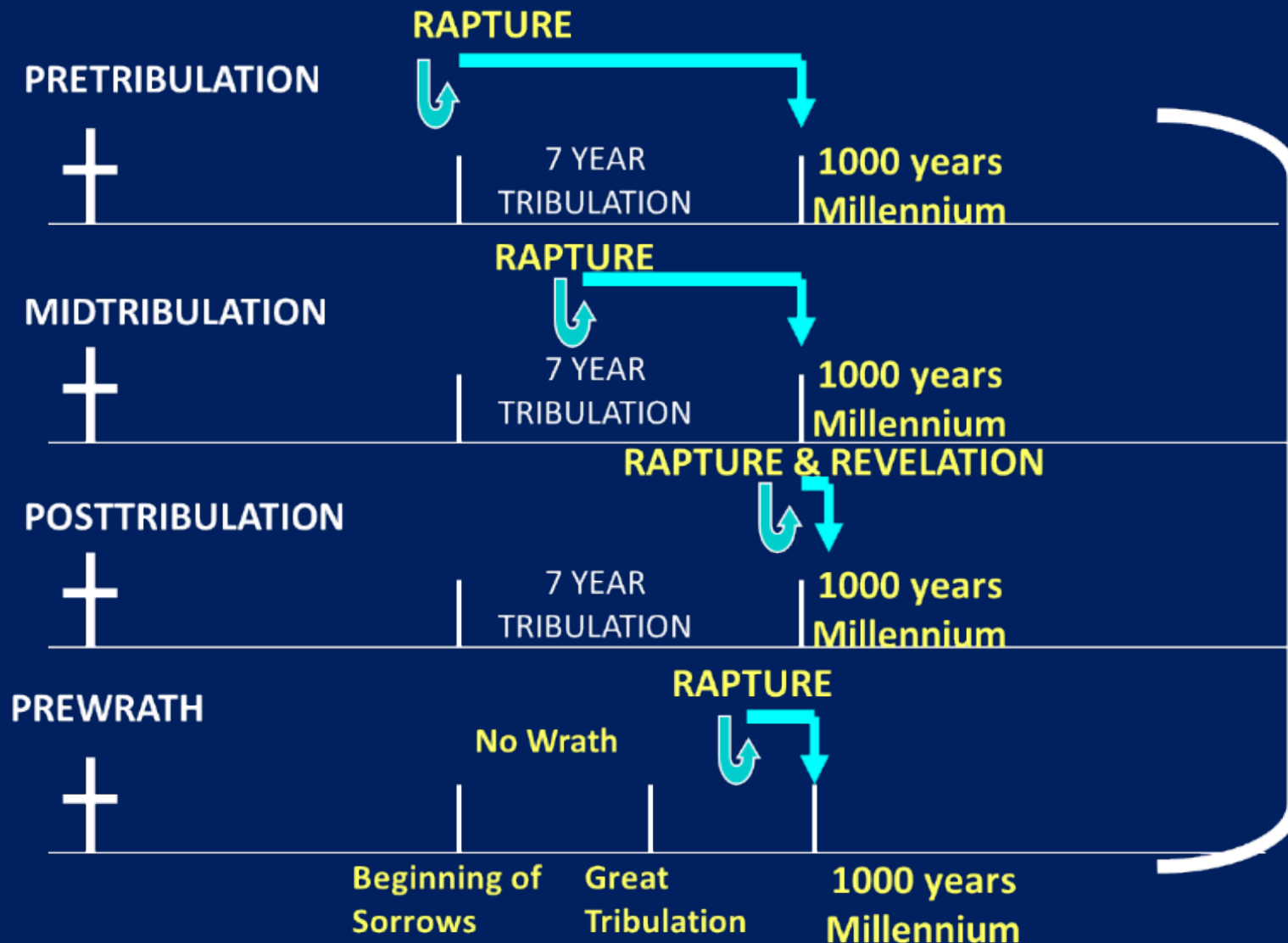


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- **Post-tribulation rapture theory**
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- Partial rapture theory



# RAPTURE VIEW COMPARISON



# 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.

# Post-tribulation Rapture Theory

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# 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

...have fallen asleep. <sup>16</sup> 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.** <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up [*harpazō*] together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. <sup>18</sup> Therefore comfort one another with these words."





# 1 Corinthians 15:50-51

“<sup>50</sup> Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. <sup>51</sup> Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed.”



## Revelation 20:4-6

“<sup>4</sup> Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I *saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life [zaō] and reigned with Christ for a thousand years....

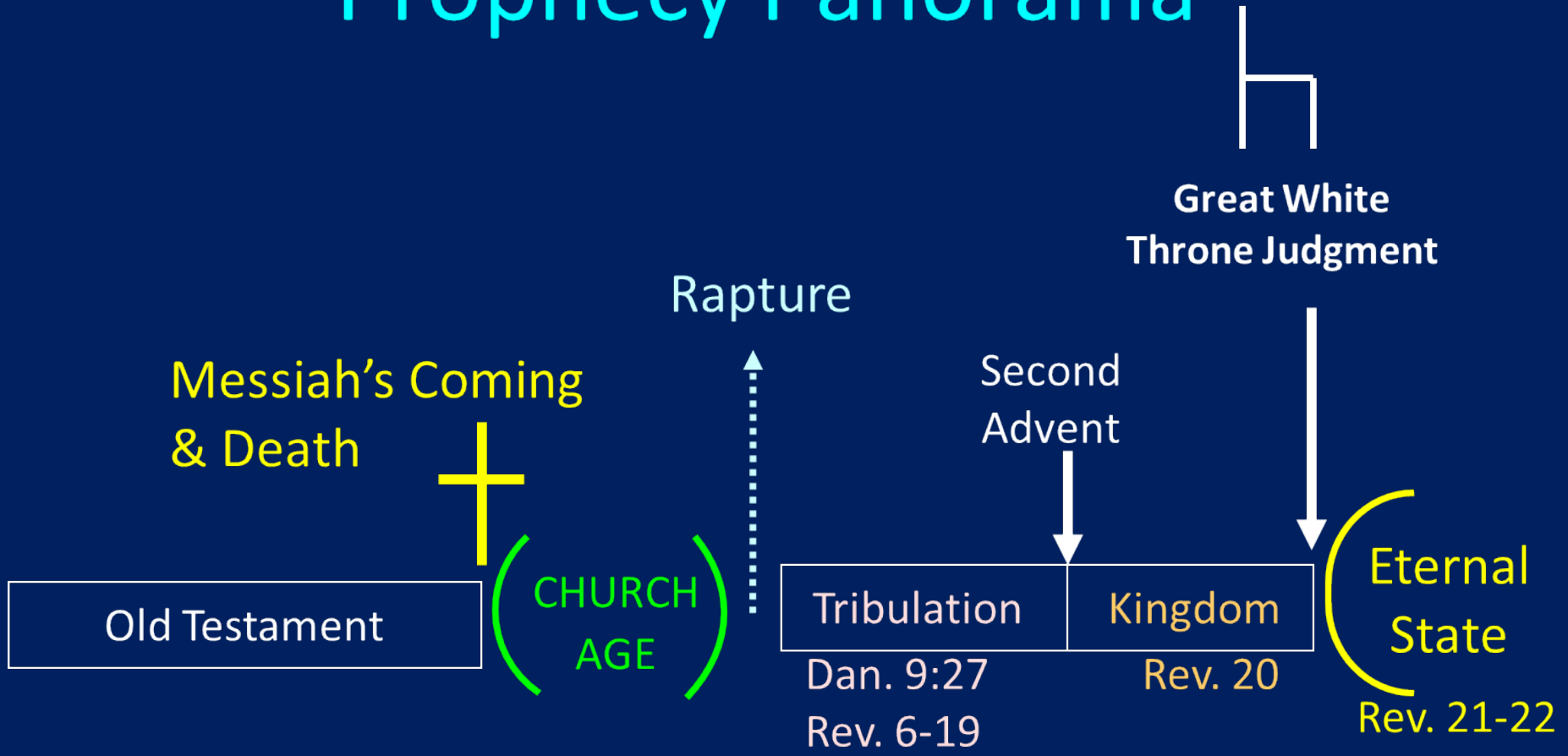


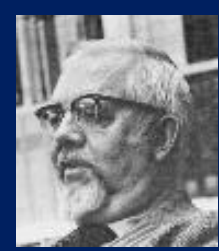
## Revelation 20:4-6

...<sup>5</sup> The rest of the dead did not come to life [zaō] until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection [anastasis].<sup>6</sup> Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection [anastasis]; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.”



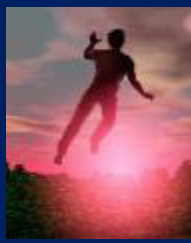
# Prophecy Panorama





# George Eldon Ladd

*The Blessed Hope* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956), 165.



According to posttribulationist George Ladd, "With the exception of one passage, the author will grant that the Scripture nowhere explicitly states that the Church will go through the Great Tribulation.. However, in one passage, Revelation 20, the Resurrection is placed at the return of Christ in glory. This is more than an inference..which requires a posttribulation view..."

## Revelation 20:4-6

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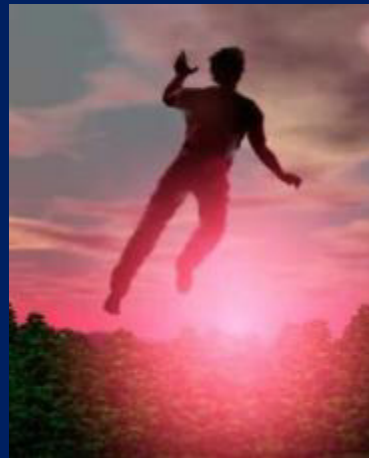




# Norman Geisler

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

“Revelation 20:4-6 is speaking of the believers who have died during the Tribulation, not those resurrected at the Rapture (1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:50-58).”



## Revelation 20:4-6

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# 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

<sup>13</sup> "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. <sup>14</sup> For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. <sup>15</sup> 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 . . .



# 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

. . . have fallen asleep. <sup>16</sup> 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. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up [*harpazō*] together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. <sup>18</sup> Therefore comfort one another with these words."



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## Charles Ryrie

*What You Should Know About the Rapture, Current Christian Issues* (Chicago: Moody, 1981), 63-64.

“...Revelation 20:4 speaks only of a resurrection of the dead, not of a translation of living people, a truth that is prominent and a vital part of the other descriptions of the rapture in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and 1 Corinthians 15:51-58).”



## Revelation 20:4-6

...<sup>5</sup> The rest of the dead did not come to life [zaō] until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection [anastasis]. <sup>6</sup> Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection [anastasis]; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.”



# God's Resurrection Program

**2 GENERAL  
RESURRECTIONS**

**BELIEVERS**

**UNBELIEVERS**

**First Fruits**

Christ

**General Harvest**

Rapture

**Gleanings**

Beginning of  
Millennium

After  
Millennium

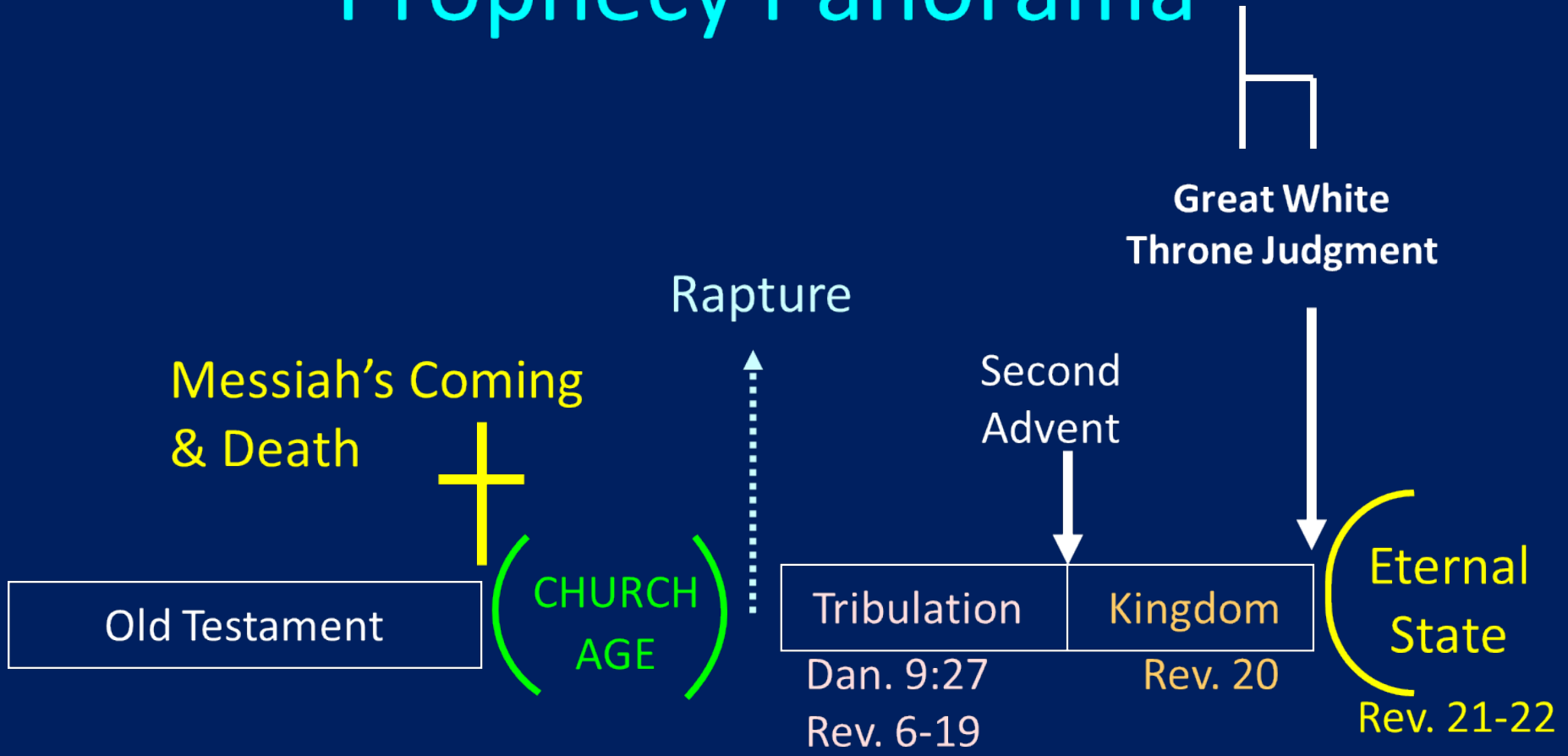
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# Prophecy Panorama



# 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.

# When is the Rapture?

## 7 Arguments Favoring the Pre-Tribulation View

1. Tribulation's purpose concerns Israel (Jer 30:7; Dan 9:24)
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# Promised Exemption from Divine Wrath

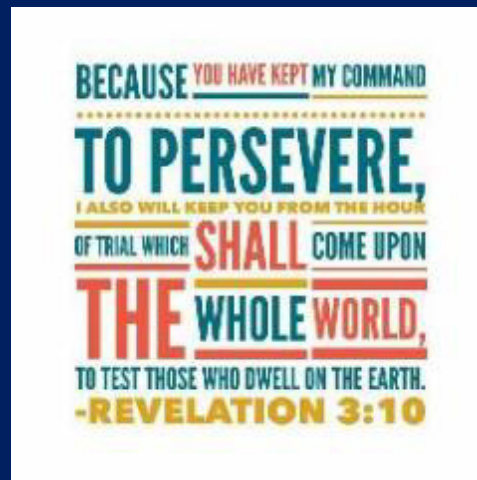
- The promise (1 Thess 1:10; 5:9; Rom 5:9; 8:1; Rev 3:10)
- Tribulation = divine wrath/anger (Rev 6:16-17; 11:18; 14:10; 15:1, 7; 16:1, 19; 19:15)



# Protection Through the Tribulation?

(Revelation 3:10)

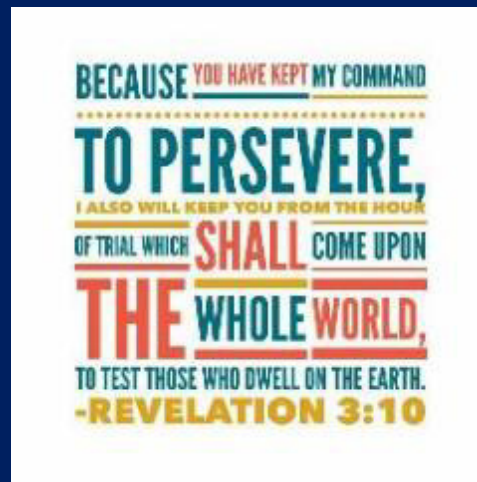
- 1) Like the protection in Goshen (Exod. 8:22, 24; 9:4, 6; 11:4-7; Rev. 9:4; 16:2)
- 2) Effective? Rev. 6:9-11; 7:13-14; 13:10, 15; 20:4



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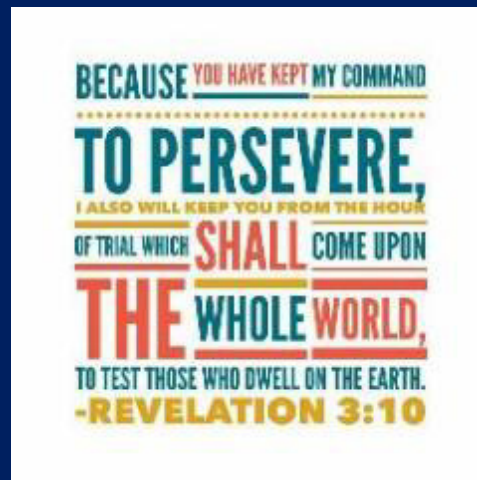




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# 1<sup>st</sup> Six Seals (Revelation 6)

**SEAL 1** – 6:1-2 – Advent of antichrist

**SEAL 2** – 6:3-4 – War

**SEAL 3** – 6:5-6 – Famine

**SEAL 4** – 6:7-8 – Death

**SEAL 5** – 6:9-11 – Martyrdoms

**SEAL 6** – 6:12-17 – Cosmic disturbances



# Distinctions Between 144,000 & Multitude

**144,000**

**MULTITUDE**

**Revelation 7:1-8**

**Revelation 7:9-17**

**Numbered**

**Innumerable**

**Jews**

**All nations**

**Sealed**

**Slain**

**Sealed before the Tribulation**

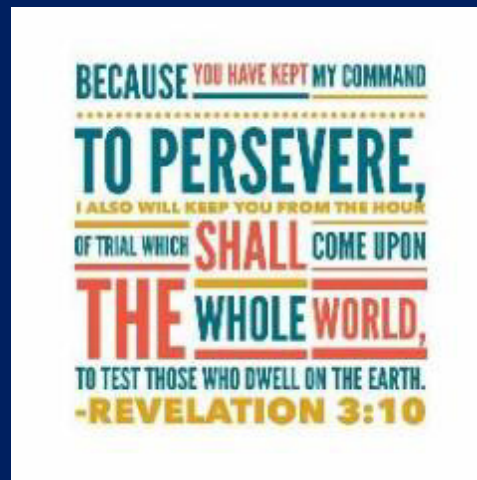
**Converted out of the Tribulation**

Hitchcock and Ice, *The Truth Behind Left Behind*, 77

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- 2) Effective? Rev. 6:9-11; 7:13-14; 13:10, 15; 20:4



# 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.”





# 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.”



## 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.”



# Norman Geisler

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

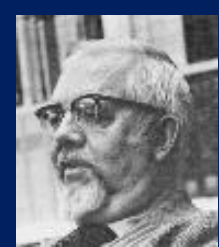
“In context, the statement about being saved 'out of' (Gk: ek) the time of trial does mean saved from it (not through it). One cannot be saved from an entire hour by being in any part of it.”



# Post-tribulation Rapture Theory

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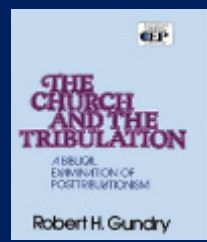


## George Eldon Ladd

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

According to posttributionalist 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-tributational premillennialism."





# 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-tribulationism'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-tribulationist 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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# 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.”*

# 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



# 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.”





## 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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# J. Dwight Pentecost

*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.”



# 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.”**

*Second Epistle of Clement  
to the Corinthians 4.15.*

(A.D. 95–140)

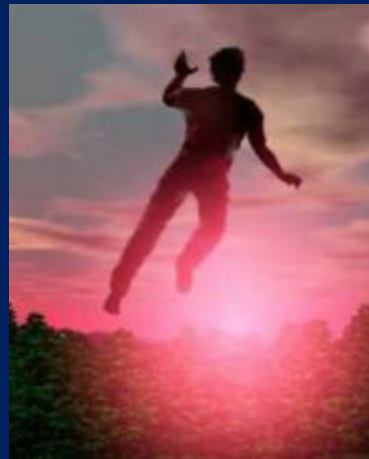
“Wherefore let us every hour expect the kingdom of God in love and righteousness; because we know not the day of God's appearing.”



## *Didache 16.1.*

(A.D. 120)

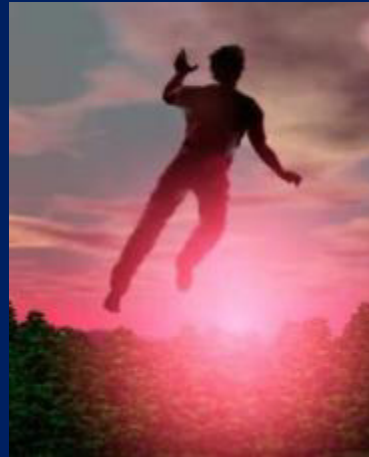
“Watch for your life's sake. Let not your lamps be quenched, nor your loins unloosed; but be ready, for you know not the hour in which our Lord will come.”



# *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.”



# Pseudo Ephraem

(4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> 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 (4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> century A.D.)
- Progressive illumination



## 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.”



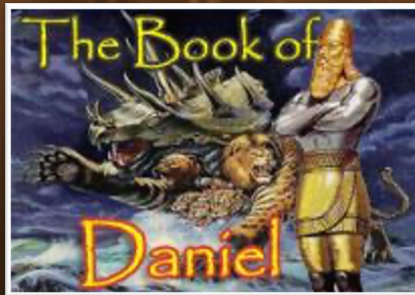
## Revelation 22:18-19

“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; <sup>19</sup> and 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.”



# Daniel 12:4, 9

“<sup>4</sup> 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...<sup>9</sup> Go *your way*, Daniel, for *these* words are concealed and sealed up until the end time.”



## Amos 8:12

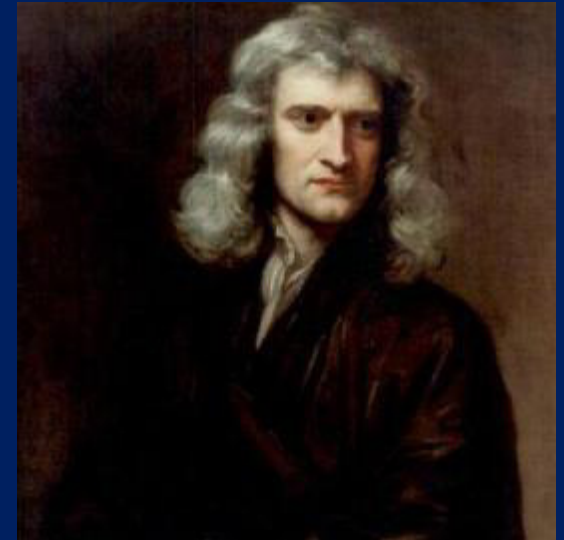
“People will stagger from sea to sea And from the north even to the east; They will go to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, But they will not find *it*.”



# Sir Isaac Newton

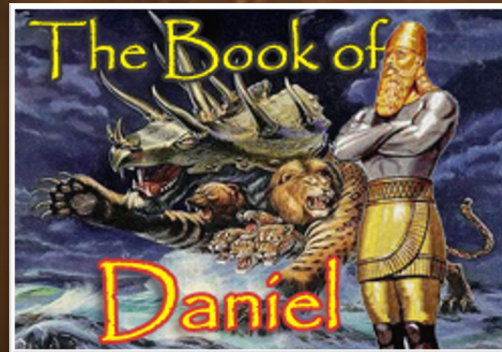
(1642–1727)

"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."



## 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.”





## 1 Peter 1:10-11

<sup>10</sup> As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that *would come* to you made careful searches and inquiries, <sup>11</sup> 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.



# History of Doctrine

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

# 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 . . .

# 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).

Conclusion

# 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



# 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.

# 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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