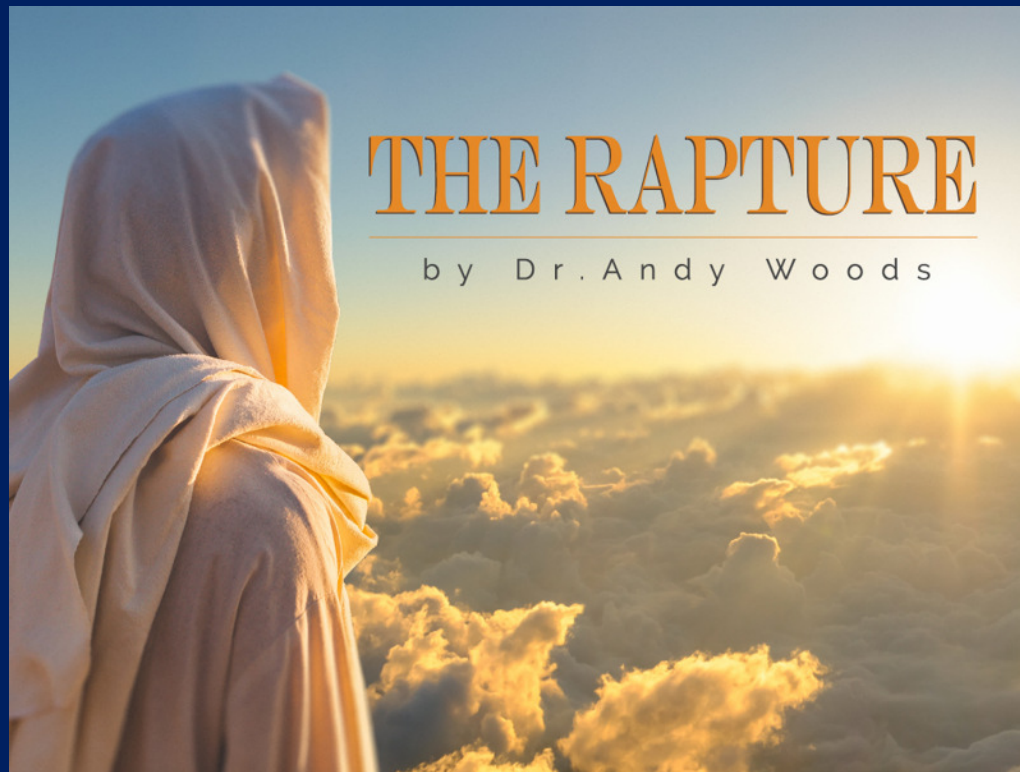


# THE RAPTURE

## What and When? – Part 1



**Dr. Andy Woods**

Senior Pastor – Sugar Land Bible Church  
President – Chafer Theological Seminary

# 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)
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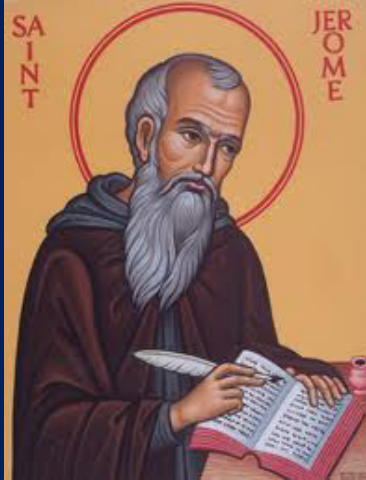
## 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

. . . 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."



# Latin Vulgate Translation

(1 Thess. 4:17)



“Deinde nos, qui vivimus, qui relinquimur, simul rapiemur cum illis in nubibus obviam Christo in aëra, et sic semper cum Domino erimus.”

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# 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.”



# Resurrection

(1 Cor 15:50-52)

- Resurrection definition
- Resurrection importance (1 Cor 15:50, 53-54)
- Resurrection of living believers (1 Cor 15:51)
- Resurrection of deceased believers (1 Cor 15:52)



## Romans 8:19-23

<sup>19</sup> “For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. <sup>20</sup> For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup> that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. <sup>22</sup> For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. <sup>23</sup> And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.”



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# Exemption from Death

(1 Cor 15:54-56)

- Enoch (Gen 5)
- Elijah (2 Kings 2)
- Christ (Acts 1:11; Rev 12:5)
- Philip (Acts 8:39)
- Paul (2 Cor 12:2, 4)
- John (Rev 4:1-2)
- Two witnesses (Rev 11)



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# 1 Corinthians 15:52

“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 will be changed.”



# 1 Corinthians 15:52

“in a moment [*atomos*], in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.”

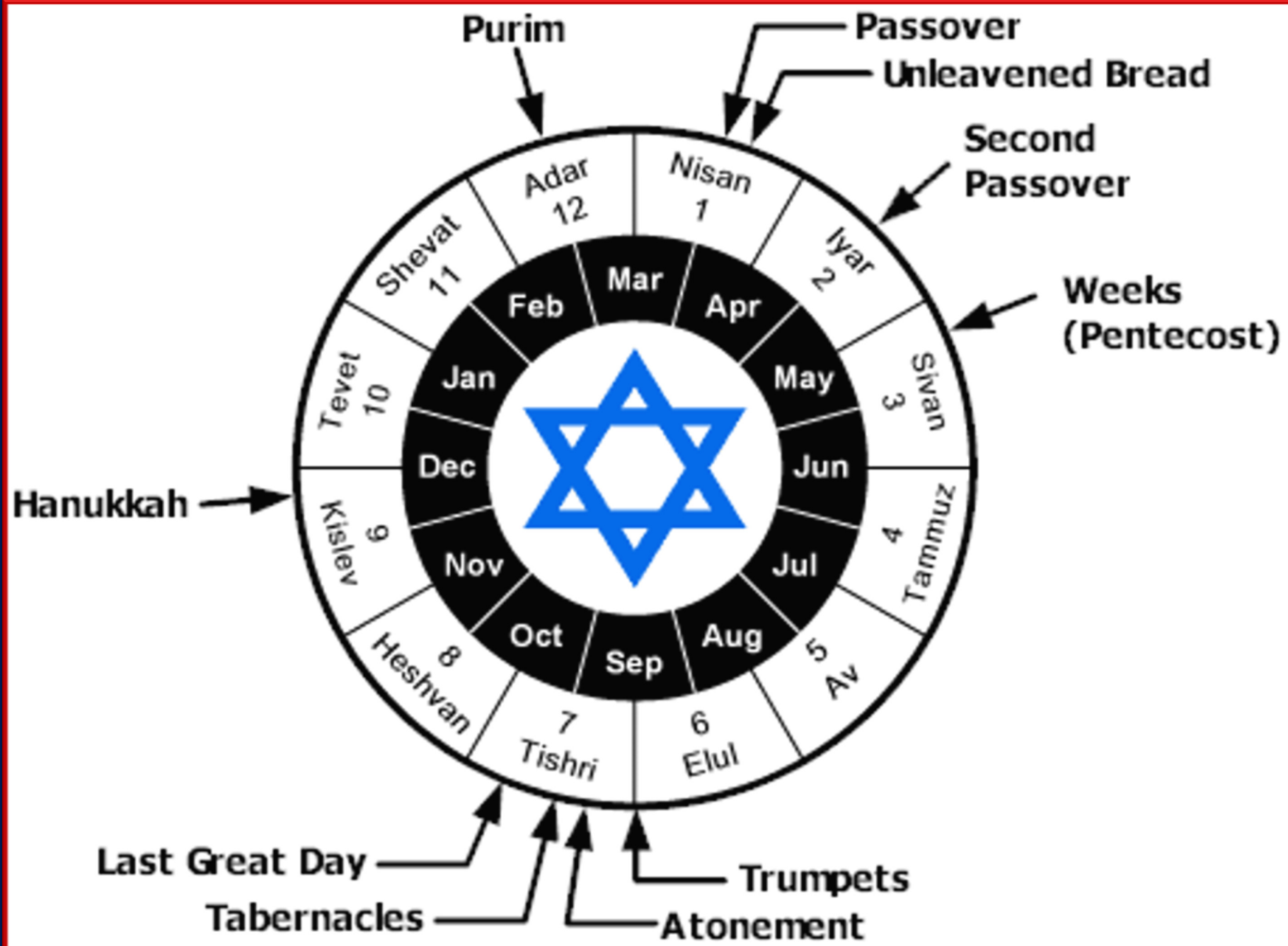


# Instantaneous

(1 Cor 15:52)

- Twinkling of an eye
- Flash or moment
- Split second
- *Atomos* (Greek) = atom (English)





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# 1 Corinthians 15:51

“Behold, I tell you a mystery [*mystērion*]; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed.”



# Mystery

(1 Cor 15:51)

- Mystery definition
- Paul's assignment
- How church age will end
- Second coming taught in both the Old and New Testaments
- Rapture taught only in the New Testament



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# “Mystery” Defined

“In the N.T, it [*mystērion*] denotes, not the mysterious (as with the Eng. word), but that which, being outside the range of unassisted natural apprehension, can be made known only by Divine revelation, and is made known in a manner and at a time appointed by God, and to those who are illumined by His Spirit.”

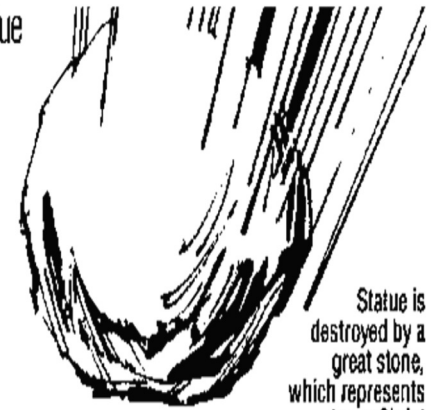


W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger, and William White, *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of the Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville: Nelson, 1996), 424.



# Statue & Stone

2. A Statue and a Stone



Statue is destroyed by a great stone, which represents Jesus Christ



HEAD  
GOLD

WORLD POWER  
BABYLON  
606-539

CHEST AND ARMS  
SILVER

WORLD POWER  
PERSIA  
539-331

STOMACH AND THIGHS  
BRASS

WORLD POWER  
GREECE  
331-323

LEGS AND FEET  
IRON & CLAY

WORLD POWER  
ROME  
322 B.C. - A.D. 476  
FUTURE

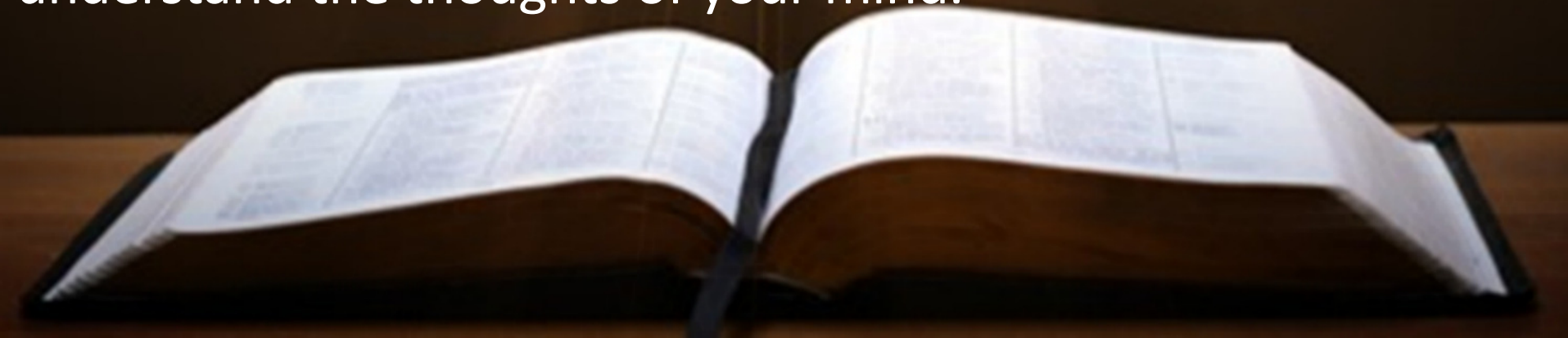
## Daniel 2:18-19, 27-30

“<sup>18</sup> so that they might request compassion from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and his friends would not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. <sup>19</sup> Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven;...<sup>27</sup> Daniel answered before the king and said, “As for the mystery about which the king has inquired, neither wise men, conjurers, magicians *nor* diviners are able to declare *it* to the king. <sup>28</sup> However, there is a God in heaven who mysteries, and He...



## Daniel 2:18-19, 27-30

...has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will take place in the latter days. This was your dream and the visions in your mind *while* on your bed. <sup>29</sup> As for you, O king, *while* on your bed your thoughts turned to what would take place in the future; and He who reveals mysteries has made known to you what will take place. <sup>30</sup> But as for me, this mystery has not been revealed to me for any wisdom residing in me more than *in any other* living man, but for the purpose of making the interpretation known to the king, and that you may understand the thoughts of your mind.”



## Colossians 1:26

“*that is*, the mystery which has been hidden from the *past* ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His.”





# Mystery

(1 Cor 15:51)

- Mystery definition
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## Ephesians 2:14-16

<sup>14</sup> “For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, <sup>15</sup> by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, <sup>16</sup> and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.”



## Ephesians 3:3-6

“<sup>3</sup> that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. <sup>4</sup> By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, <sup>5</sup> which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; <sup>6</sup> to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel”.



## Ruth 1:16

“But Ruth said, “Do not urge me to leave you *or* turn back from following you; for where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God.”



## Ephesians 3:9

“and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things.”



# Mystery

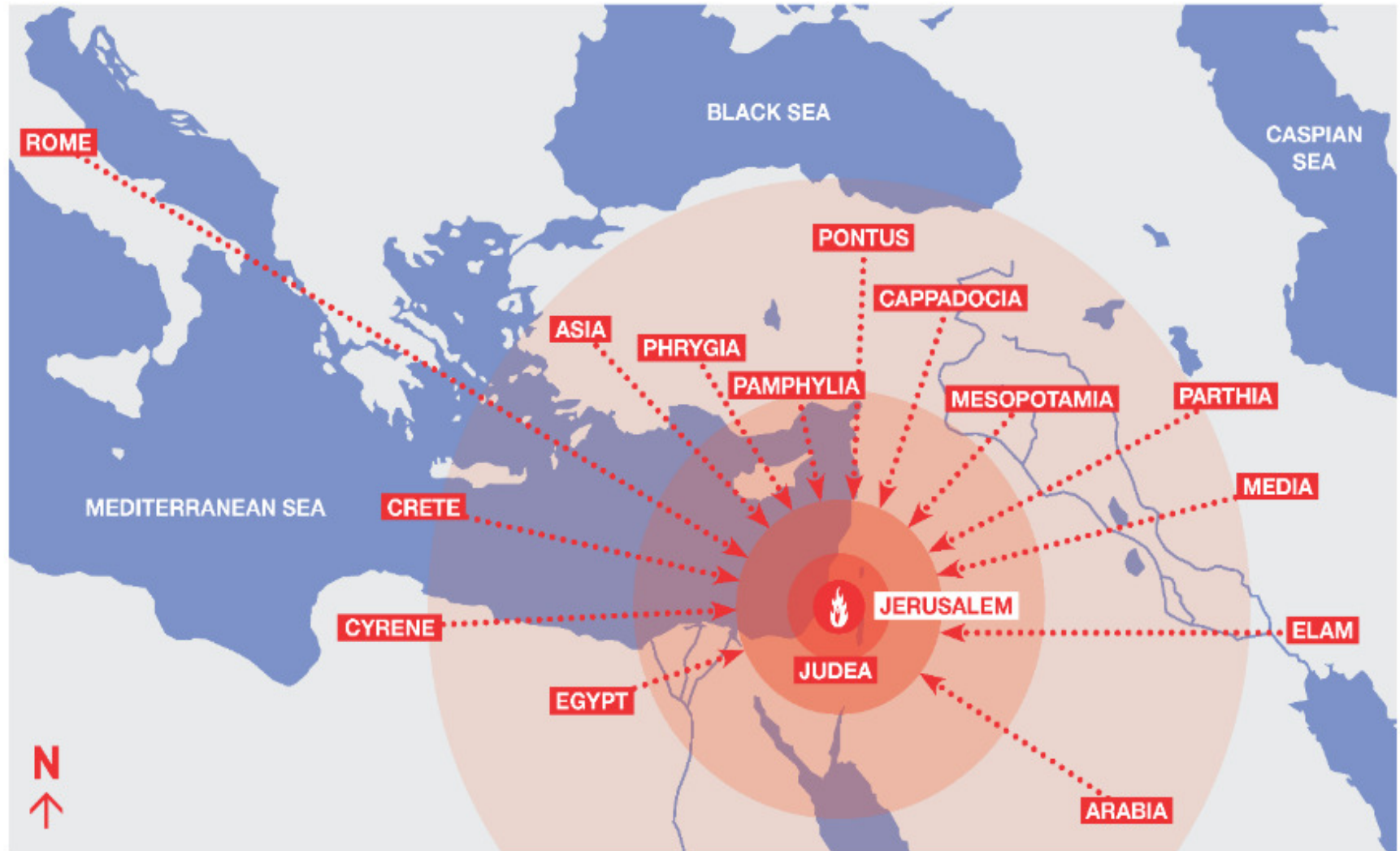
(1 Cor 15:51)

- Mystery definition
- Paul's assignment
- How church age will end
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# THE NATIONS OF PENTECOST ACTS 2:9-11

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# Mystery

(1 Cor 15:51)

- Mystery definition
- Paul's assignment
- How church age will end
- **Part of Inter-Advent Age**
- Second coming taught in both the Old and New Testaments
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# Matthew 13 Parables

- Public parables (13:1-2)
  - ◆ Sower (13:1-9, 18-23)
  - ◆ Wheat and tares (13:24-30, 36-43)
  - ◆ Mustard seed (13:31-32)
  - ◆ Leaven (13:33)
- Private parables (13:36)
  - ◆ Earthen treasure (13:44)
  - ◆ Pearl of great price (13:45-46)
  - ◆ Dragnet (13:47-50)
  - ◆ Householder (13:51-52)

# Matthew 13:11

Jesus answered them, “To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted.”



## Matthew 13:16-17

“<sup>16</sup> But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. <sup>17</sup> For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see *it*, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear *it*.”



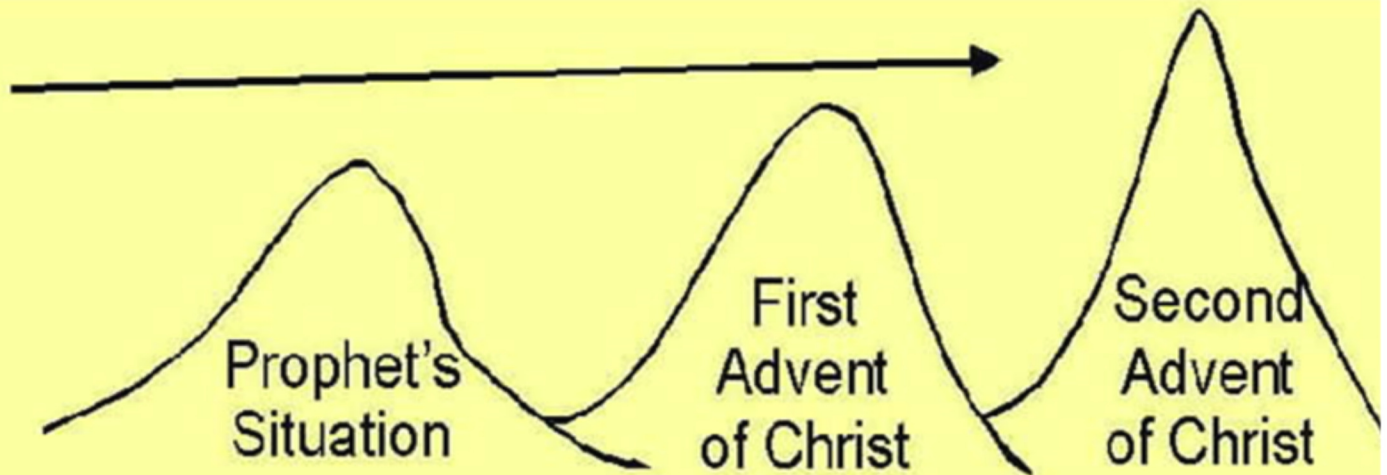
# Matthew 13:35

*“This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: ‘I WILL OPEN MY MOUTH IN PARABLES; I will utter things hidden since the foundation of the world.’”*



# Mountain Peaks of Prophecy

Multiple fulfilments in one prophecy



## Zechariah 9:9-10

<sup>9</sup> Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey. <sup>10</sup> I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; And the bow of war will be cut off. And He will speak peace to the nations; And His dominion will be from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth.



## Isaiah 9:6-7

<sup>6</sup> For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup> There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.



## 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.



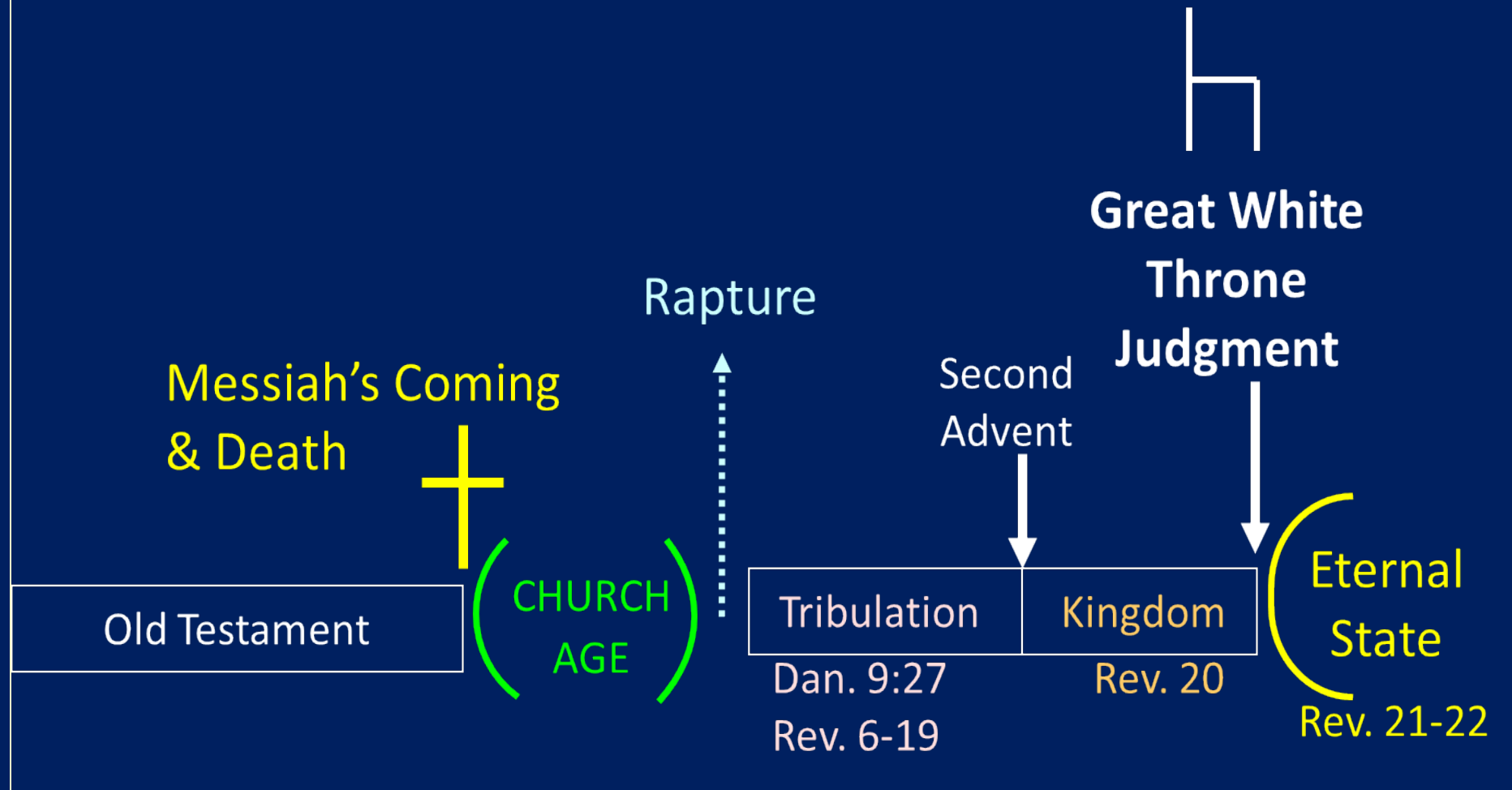


## Isaiah 26:19-20

“<sup>19</sup> Your dead will live; Their corpses will rise.  
You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy,  
For your dew is as the dew of the dawn, And  
the earth will give birth to the departed spirits.  
<sup>20</sup> Come, my people, enter into your rooms  
And close your doors behind you; Hide for a  
little while Until indignation runs its course.”



# Prophecy Panorama



# Mystery

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## John 14:1–4

<sup>1</sup> “Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. <sup>2</sup> “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. <sup>3</sup> “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. <sup>4</sup> “And you know the way where I am going.”





## New Mystery Truth

“But here in John 14 the Lord gives a new and unique revelation; He speaks of something which no prophet had promised, or even could promise. Where is it written that this Messiah would come and instead of gathering His saints into an earthly Jerusalem, would take them to the Father's house, to the very place where He is? It is something new.”



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# Imminent

(1 Cor 15:51; 1 Thess 4:15)



- Imminency definition
- James 5:8; 1 Thess 1:10; 1 Cor 1:7; Philip 3:20
- We are to be looking for Jesus Christ and not the Antichrist!
- Motivator (Holiness, Evangelism)



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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 Corinthians 15:51

“Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed.”





## Wayne Brindle

"Biblical Evidence for the Imminence of the Rapture,"  
*Bibliotheca Sacra* 158, no. 630 (April-June 2001): 138-51.

“Four criteria may be suggested, any one of which indicates imminence: (1) The passage speaks of Christ’s return as at any moment. (2) The passage speaks of Christ’s return as ‘near,’ without stating any signs that must precede His coming. (3) The passage speaks of Christ’s return as something that gives believers hope and encouragement, without indicating that these believers will suffer tribulation. (4) The passage speaks of Christ’s return as giving hope without relating it to God’s judgment of unbelievers.”



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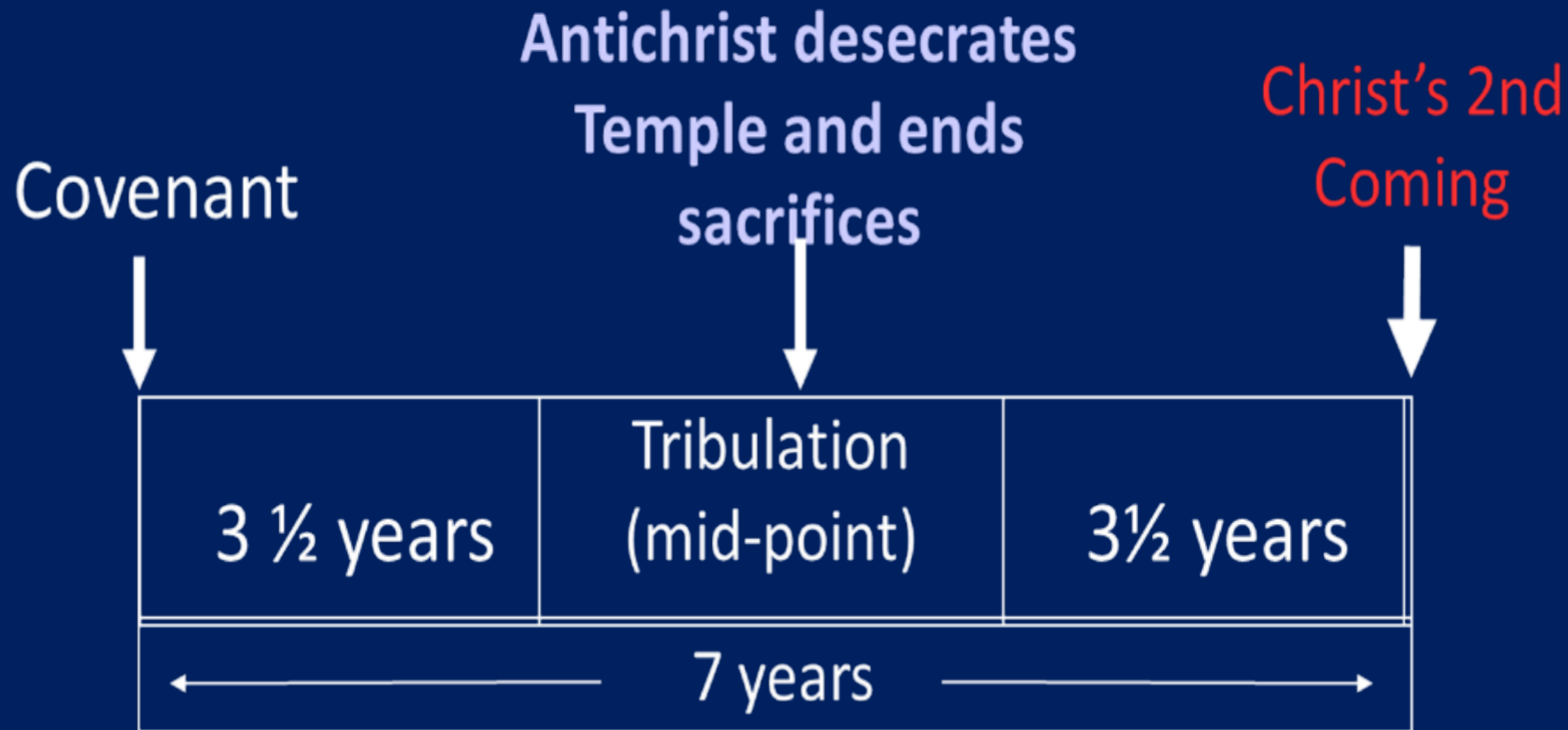


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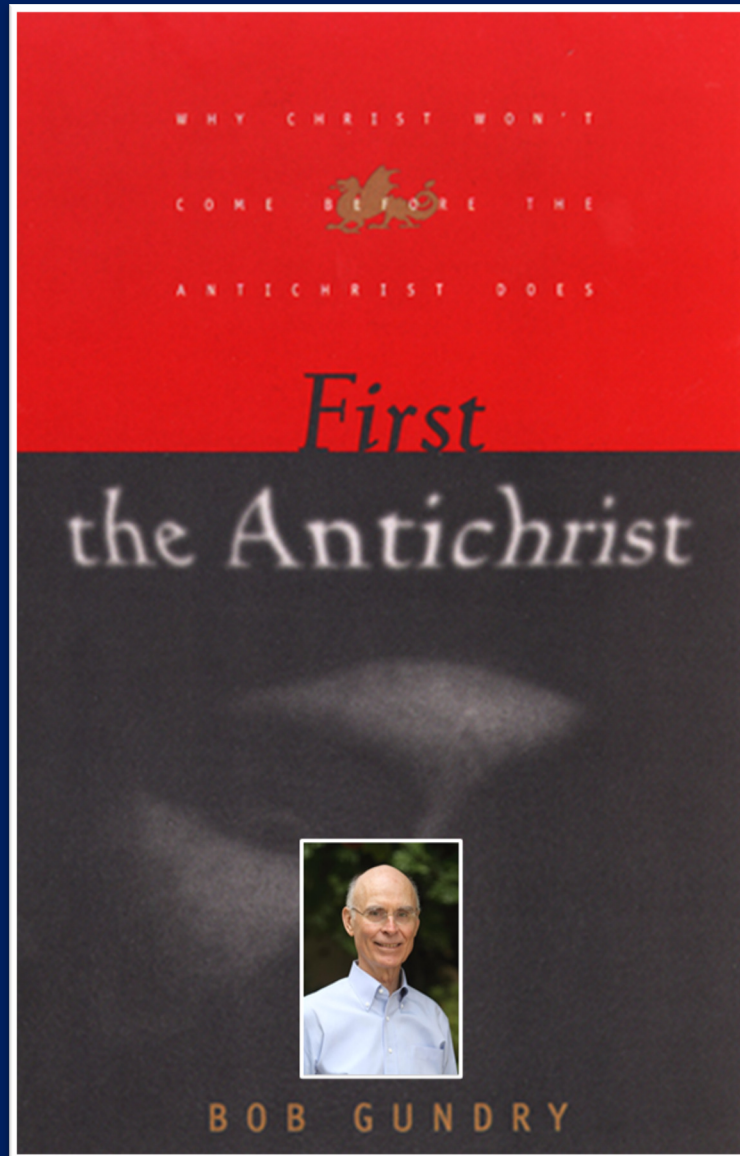
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# DAN 9:27 OVERVIEW OF TRIBULATION PERIOD

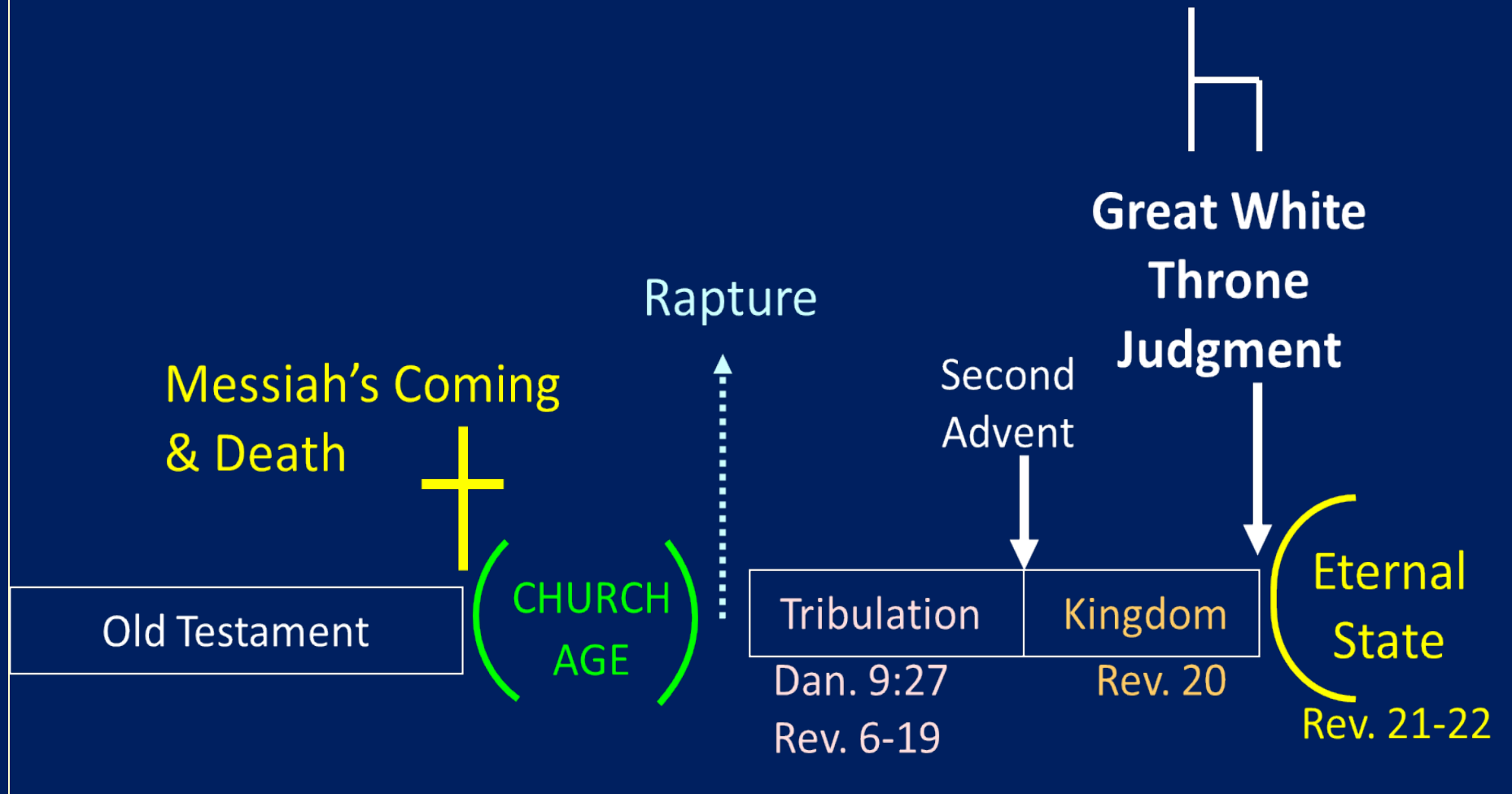






Robert H. Gundry, *The Church and the Tribulation: Why Christ Won't Come Before the Antichrist Does* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973).

# Prophecy Panorama







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# “The Rapture” is a New Doctrine? Three Logical Fallacies

1. Recency fallacy
2. Ad-populum fallacy
3. Genetic fallacy



# “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



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- Progressive illumination





## Acts 20:29-31

<sup>29</sup> “I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; <sup>30</sup> and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. <sup>31</sup> “Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.



# “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





# Ante-Nicene Fathers: "Heavenly and Eschatological" Interpretation of John 14:1-4

- Papias (AD 110)
- Irenaeus (AD 130-202)
- Tertullian (AD 196-212)
- Origen (AD 182-251)
- Cyprian (AD 258)



## Ante-Nicene Fathers: "Heavenly and Eschatological" Interpretation of John 14:1-4

"Interestingly, references to John 14:1-3 virtually disappear when perusing the writings of the Nicene and Post-Nicene fathers. This is a bit surprising, given the abundance of material in these later writers when compared with the Ante-Nicenes. I would assume that with the rise of Augustinian amillennialism and its optimistic interpretation regarding the present arrival of the Kingdom of God, the kind of hope held out in John 14:1-3 ceased to hold relevance."

# “The Rapture” a Traditional Doctrine Now Being Recovered

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- Pseudo Ephraem (4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> century A.D.)
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# 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.”

# 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.”**



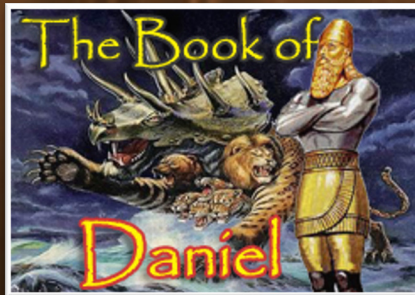
# “The Rapture” a Traditional Doctrine Now Being Recovered

- Sola scriptura
- Negative influence of Augustine and Origen
- Pseudo Ephraem (4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> century A.D.)
- Progressive illumination



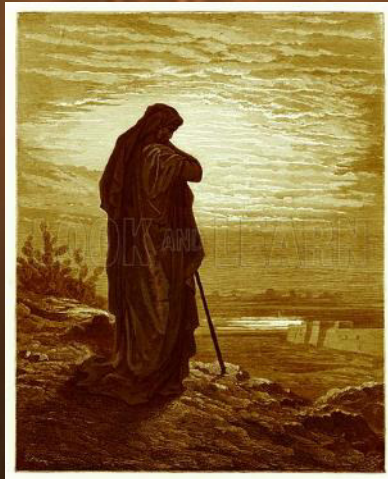
# Daniel 12:4, 9

“<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."

# 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



# 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