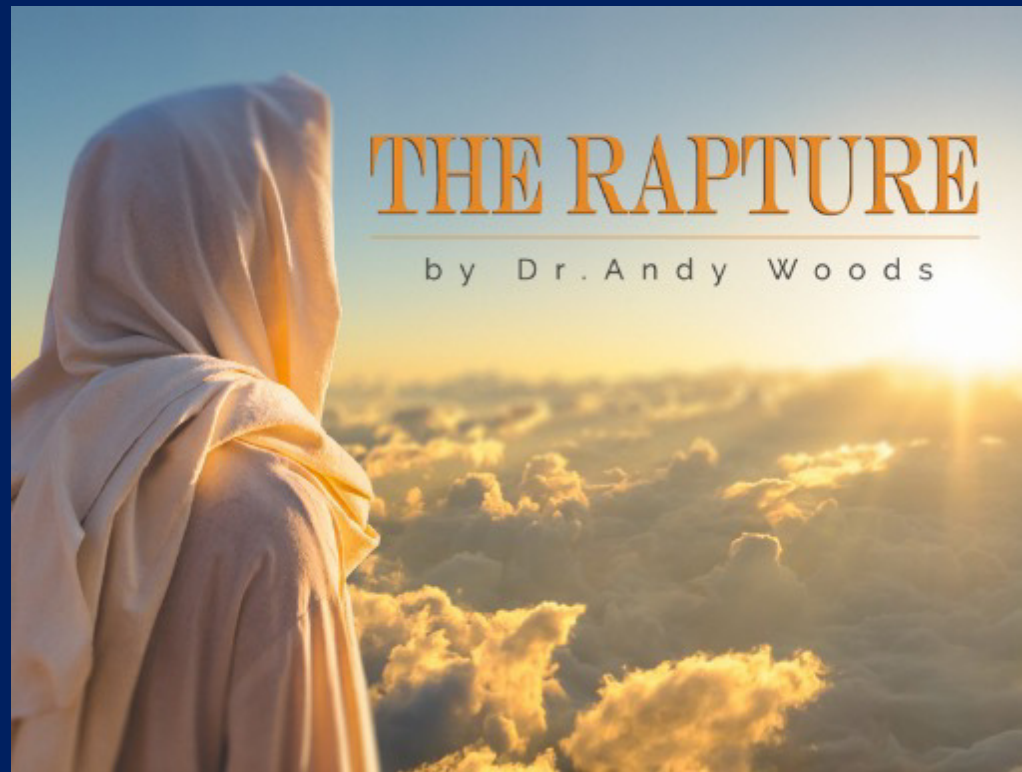


THE RAPTURE

What and When? – Part 47



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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When is the Rapture?

7 Arguments Favoring the Pre-Tribulation View

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)
3. Church is promised an exemption from divine wrath (1 Thess 1:10; 5:9; Rom 5:9; Rev 3:10; 6:17)
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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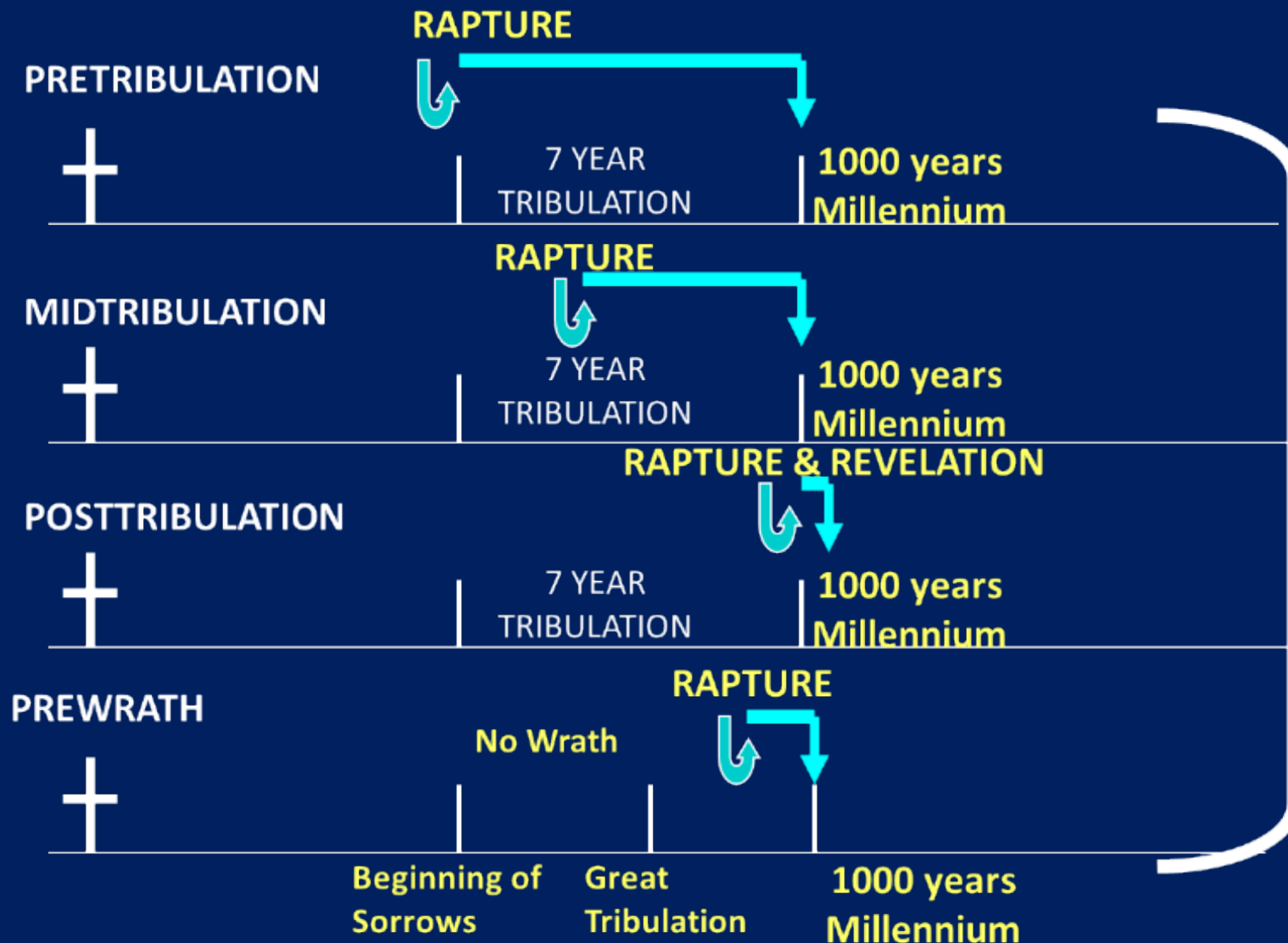


When Will the Rapture Take Place Relative to the Tribulation Period?

- Pre-tribulation rapture theory
- Mid-tribulation rapture theory
- Post-tribulation rapture theory
- Pre-wrath rapture theory
- Partial rapture theory



RAPTURE VIEW COMPARISON



Y-H-Z-H-E

Pre-Wrath Rapturism

- I. Description of the view
- II. Six problems with the view considering prior Pre-Tribulational Arguments
- III. Four additional problems with the view

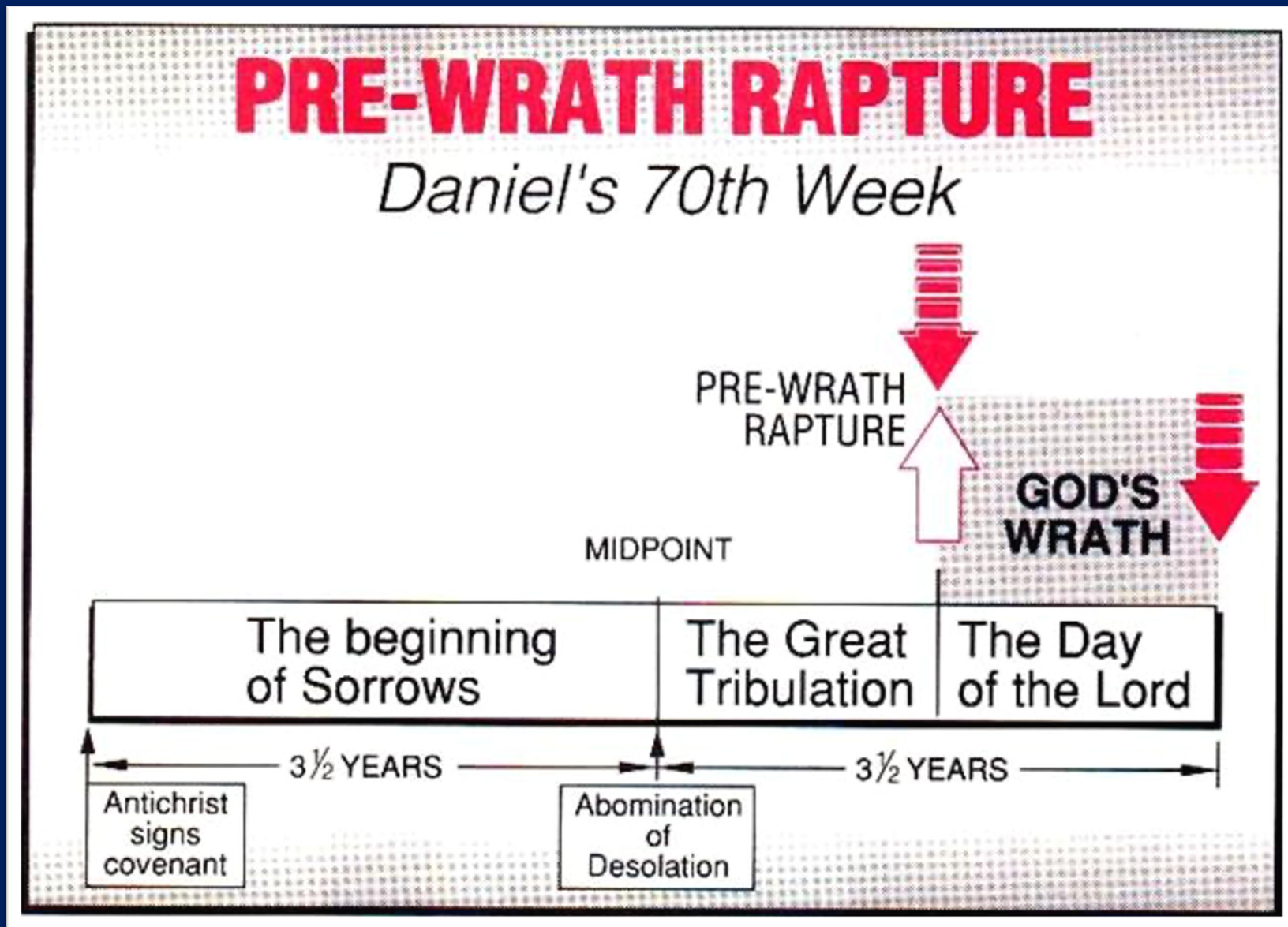


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Marvin J. Rosenthal, *The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church: A New Understanding of the Tribulation, and the Second Coming* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1990), 112.



Pre-Wrath Rapturism

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II. Pre-Wrath Rapture Theory Problems

- A. Places the Church in Daniel's 70th Week
- B. Fails to acknowledge the missing Church (Rev. 4–22)
- C. Confines God's wrath to only a portion of the Tribulation's second half
- D. Denies the Rapture's imminency
- E. Fails to consistently explain how the rapture is a comfort to the believer (John 14:1; 1 Thess. 4:18; Titus 2:13)
- F. Misinterprets the restrainer (2 Thess. 2:6-7) as Michael the Archangel rather than the Holy Spirit

Pre-Wrath Rapturism

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III. Additional Problems with Pre-Wrath Rapturism

- A. It imposes an artificial construct on Daniel's 70th Week
- B. Great Tribulation (unequaled distress) before God's wrath?
- C. It places the Rapture in Revelation 7:9-17
- D. It places the Rapture in Matthew 24:31, 40-41



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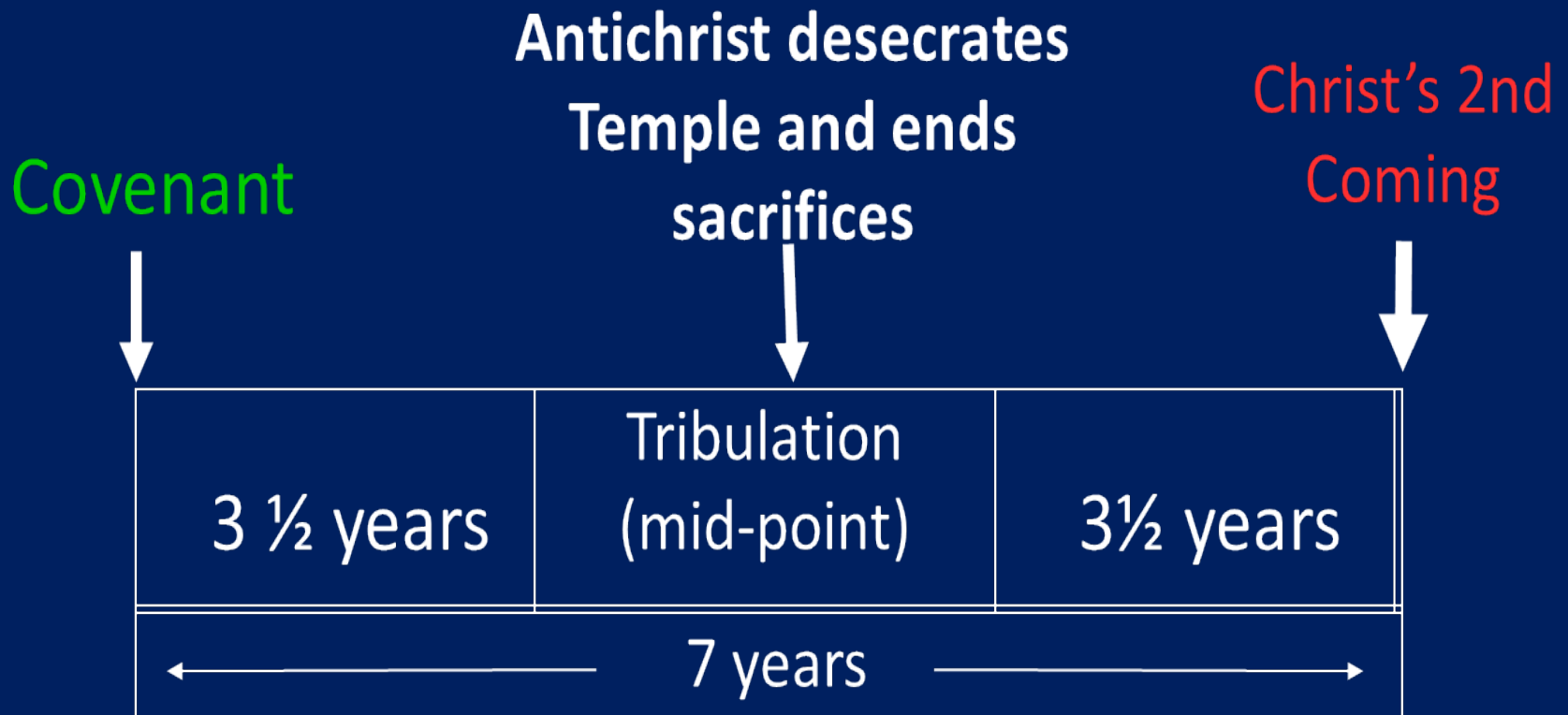


Daniel 9:27

“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.”



DAN 9:27 OVERVIEW OF TRIBULATION PERIOD



PROPHETIC SYNONYMNS

A. Division of the Tribulation into two 3½ year periods

1. 42 months - Rev. 11:2; 13:5

2. 1260 days – Rev. 11:3; 12:6

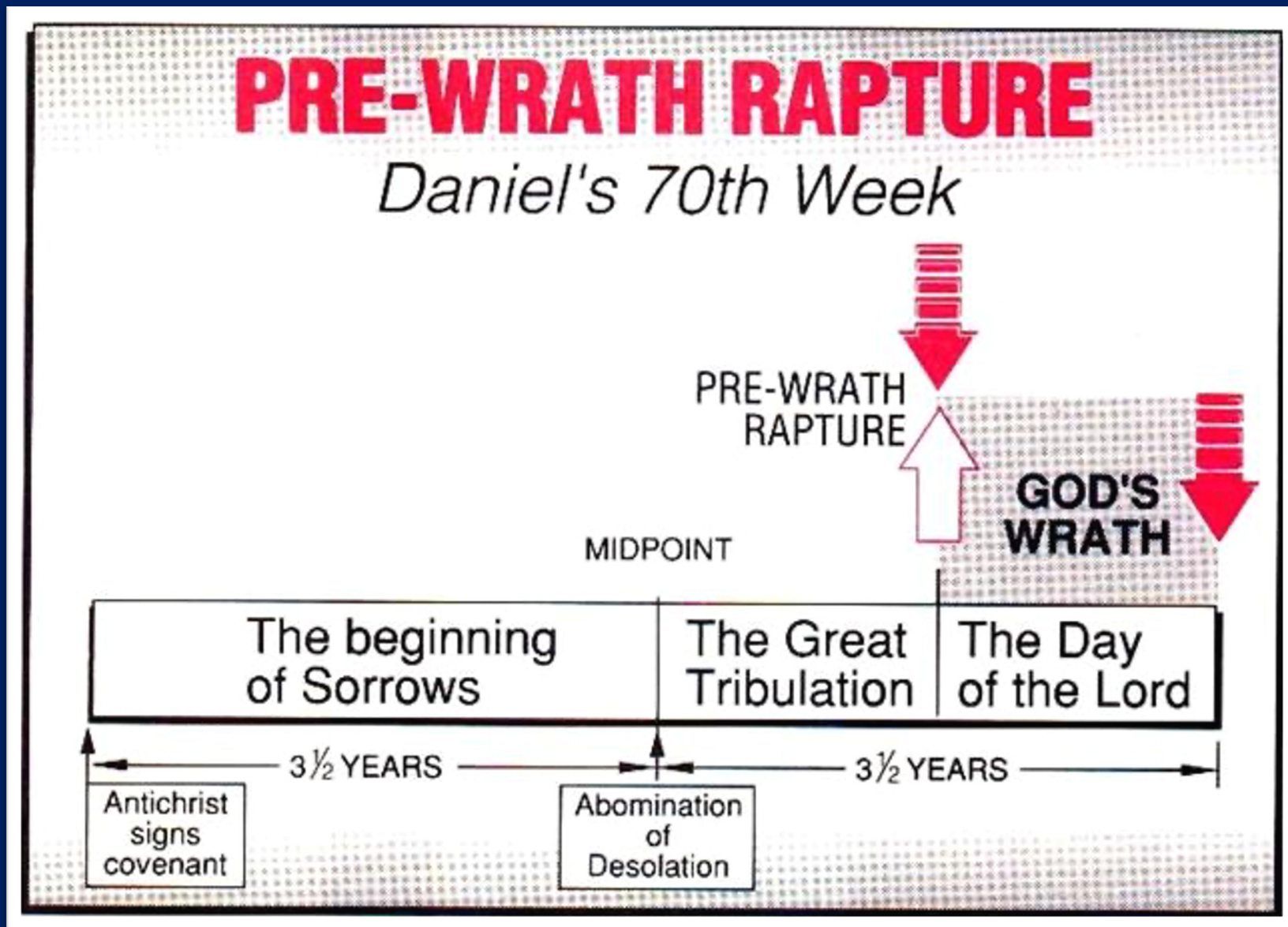
3. Time, times, and a half a time – Dan. 7:25;
12:7; 12:14

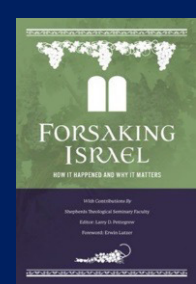
Matthew 24:15-16, 20

“¹⁵ 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) ¹⁶ then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains...²⁰ But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath.”



Marvin J. Rosenthal, *The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church: A New Understanding of the Tribulation, and the Second Coming* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1990), 112.





Three Parts?

“...the Scriptures never divide the Tribulation period into thirds. Daniel’s prophecy divides the seventieth week in two (Dan 9:27); half of the Tribulation is described as numbering 1260 days (Rev 11:3; 12:6). In fact, since Revelation 12:14 explains that God will protect fleeing Jews for ‘a time, and times, and half a time’ (1260 days); and since the beginning of this period is the beginning of the last three and one-half years, the Great Tribulation (Matt 24:15-22) must last for 1260 days. The Bible never divides the 1260 days into two 630 days.”

Larry D. Pettegrew, "The Messiah's Lecture on the Future of Israel," in *Forsaking Israel: How It Happened and Why It Matters*, ed. Larry D. Petegrew (The Woodlands, TX: Kress Biblical Resources, 2020), 340..

Colossians 2:8

“See to it that there is no one who takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception in accordance with human tradition, in accordance with the elementary principles of the world, rather than in accordance with Christ.”

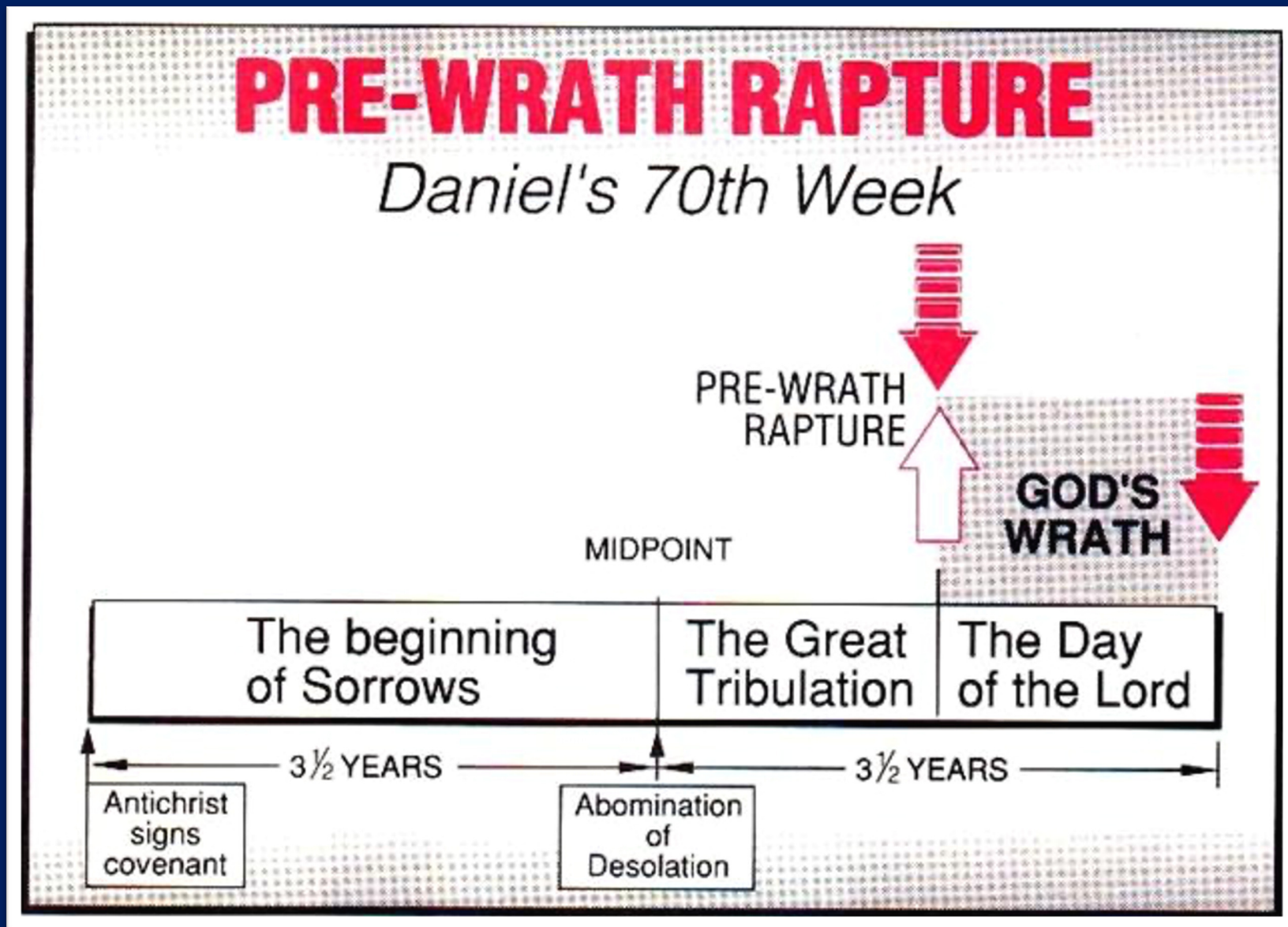


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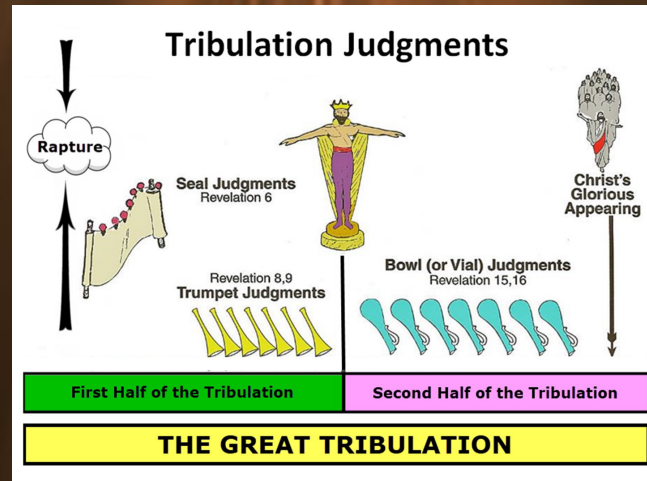


Marvin J. Rosenthal, *The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church: A New Understanding of the Tribulation, and the Second Coming* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1990), 112.

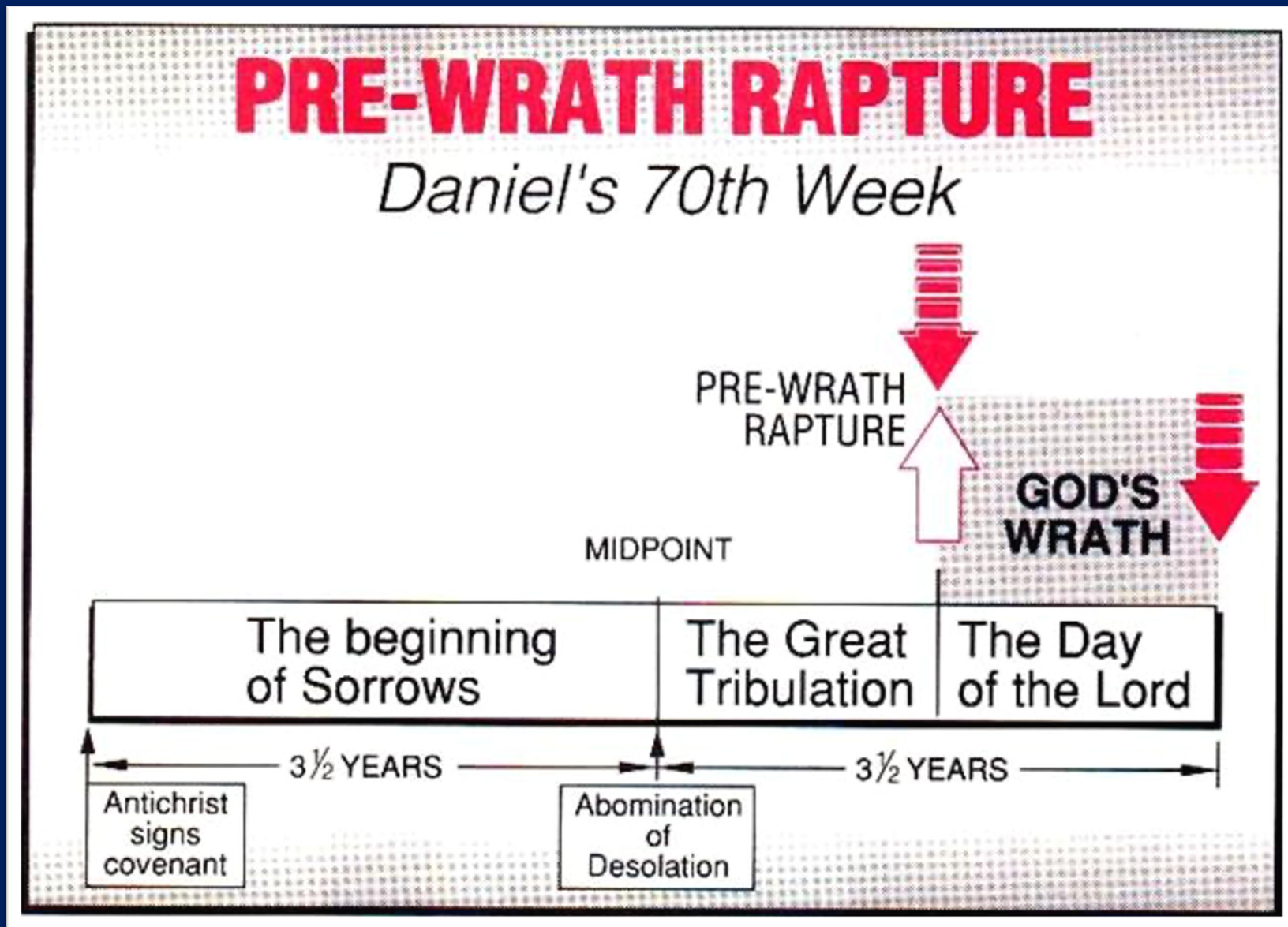


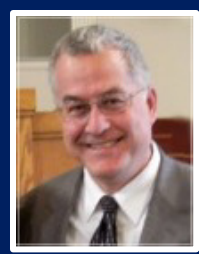
Matthew 24:21

“For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will.”



Marvin J. Rosenthal, *The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church: A New Understanding of the Tribulation, and the Second Coming* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1990), 112.



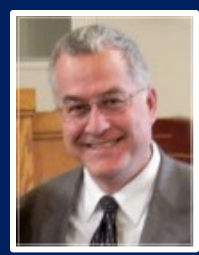


George Zeller

"Pre-Wrath Confusion,"

online: <http://www.middletonbiblechurch.org/proph/prewrath.htm>, accessed 01 September 2015.

“The PRE-WRATH view teaches that the Day of the Lord begins after the Great Tribulation and that the Day of the Lord is the time of God's wrath. Matthew 24:21, Daniel 12:1 and Jeremiah 30:7 all teach that the Great Tribulation is the greatest time of trouble that the world has ever known. Therefore, if the Day of the Lord is distinct from the Great Tribulation, then the Day of the Lord must be LESS SEVERE than the Great Tribulation. But how can the great day of God's wrath be less severe and less troublesome than the Great Tribulation?”



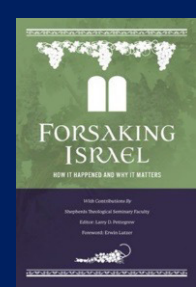
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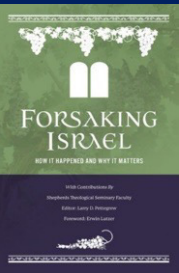
“How can God's wrath be less severe than man's wrath? How can the trumpets and bowls be less severe than the fifth seal? How can God's wrath be less severe than Satan's wrath? How can unregenerate men and Satan cause more trouble for this world than the wrathful JUDGE Himself? The PRE-WRATH view, when compared with Matthew 24:21 and these other verses, makes the Day of the Lord an ANTICLIMAX!”

Unequaled Distress?



“A...flaw in the prewrath interpretation of Matthew 24:22 is its logical failure. The reason that the Great Tribulation is shortened, according to this verse, is that if it were not, no flesh would be saved. The point of the Scripture is that when the Great Tribulation is over, something better comes on the scene. In the prewrath scheme, however, something more horrible occurs after the Great Tribulation—the Day of the Lord.”

Unequaled Distress?



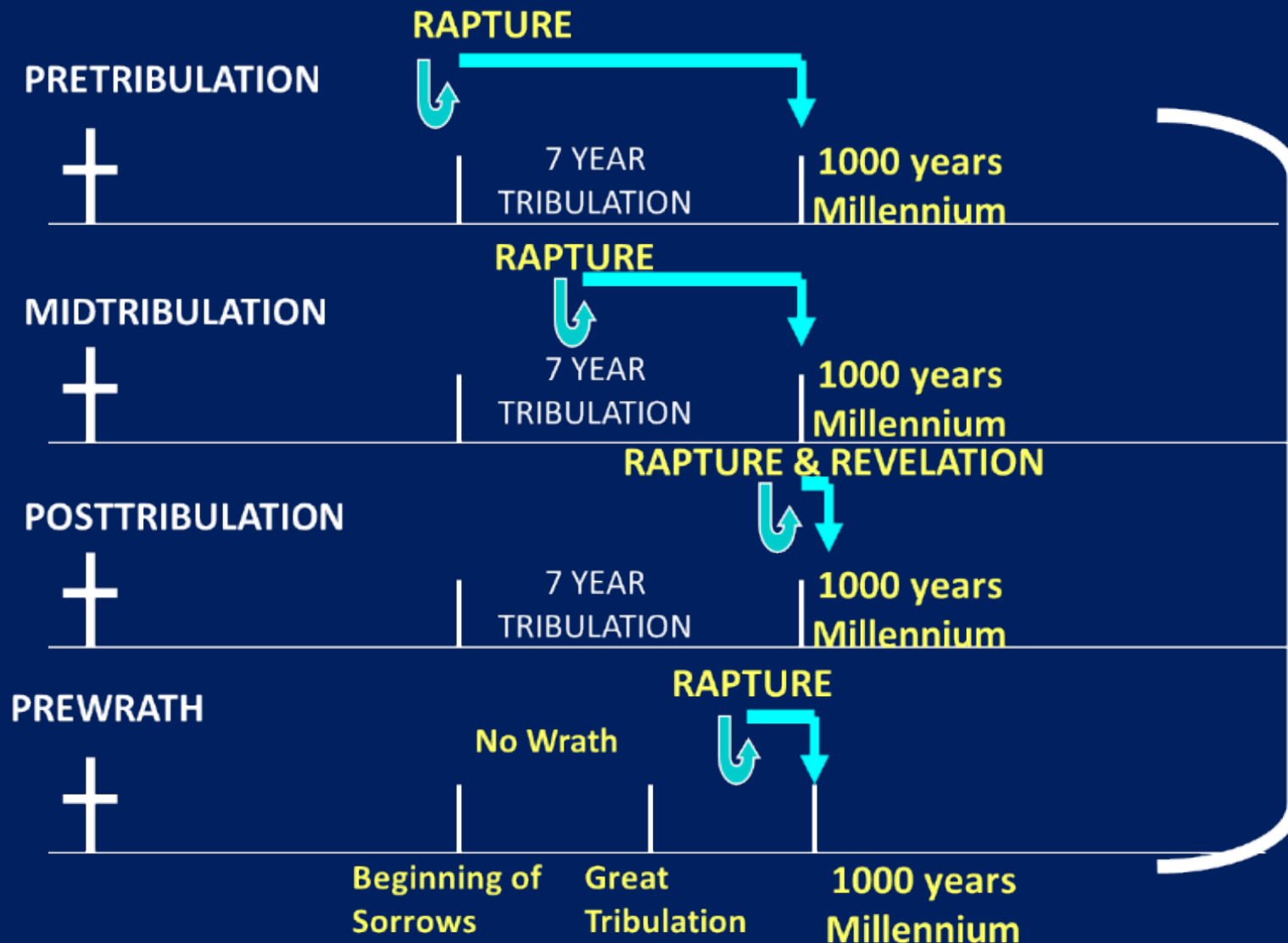
“If no flesh would have survived if the Great Tribulation were allowed to continue on twenty-one months, surely no flesh would survive if the Great Tribulation were to be cut short and followed by twenty-one months of a more horrible Day of the Lord. Moreover, Matthew 24:21 says that the Great Tribulation will be the worst time ever. So, how can it be replaced by the Day of the Lord which is more horrible? Wouldn't that be the worst time ever? In fact, the Great Tribulation (Matt 24:21) and the Day of the Lord (Dan 12:1; Jer 30:7) are both said to be the worst time ever, so they must be the same time period or at least overlap.”

III. Additional Problems with Pre-Wrath Rapturism

- A. It imposes an artificial construct on Daniel's 70th Week
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RAPTURE VIEW COMPARISON



Y-H-Z-H-E

Revelation 7:9, 13-14

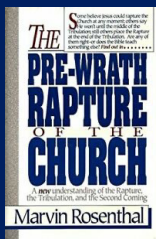
“⁹ After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and *all the* tribes, peoples, and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands...¹³ Then one of the elders responded, saying to me, . . .



Revelation 7:9, 13-14

. . . ‘These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?’ ¹⁴ I said to him, ‘My lord, you know.’ And he said to me, ‘These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation [*thlípsis*], and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.’”





Marvin Rosenthal

“That great multitude represents the true Church which goes into the Seventieth Week of Daniel. They are raptured and at the end of the Great Tribulation but before the Day of the Lord begins. They are raptured before God’s wrath is poured out but are not exempt from the ultimate rebellion of unregenerate men...Therefore, in chapter 7 the Church is raptured. But immediately prior to the rapture of the Church the 144,000 Jews are sealed...The 144,000 must be sealed for protection to go through the Day of the Lord before the Church can be caught up to the throne in heaven.”

Marvin J. Rosenthal, *The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church: A New Understanding of the Tribulation, and the Second Coming* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1990), 185.

PRE-WRATH RAPTURIST – ALAN KURSCHNER

MATTHEW 24	PARALLELS	REVELATION 6-7
4-5	The Antichrist / False Christs	1 st Seal (6:1-2)
6-7	Wars	2 nd Seal (6:3-4)
7	Famine	3 rd Seal (6:5-6)
9, 21-22	Martyrdom / (Great Tribulation)	4 th Seal (6:7-8)
9, 21-22	Result of Martyrdom / (Great Tribulation)	5 th Seal (6:9-11)
29	Celestial Disturbances	6 th Seal (6:12-17)
30-31	Raptured Saints	Interlude (7:9-17)
14, 30, 37-40	Day of the Lord's Wrath	7 th Seal (Trumpet, Bowls)

Alan Kurschner, *The Antichrist Before the Day of the Lord: What Every Christian Needs to Know About the Return of Christ* (Pompton Lakes, NJ: Eschatos, 2013), 99.

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¹³ . . . ‘These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?’ ¹⁴ I said to him, ‘My lord, you know.’ And he said to me, ‘These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation [*thlípsis*], and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.’”



Ephesians 2:20

“having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner *stone*.”



Revelation 7:9, 13-14

¹³ . . . ‘These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they **come (erchomai)** from?’ ¹⁴ I said to him, ‘My lord, you know.’ And he said to me, ‘These are the ones who **come (erchomai)** out of the great tribulation [*thlípsis*], and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.’”



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.”

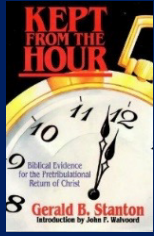




Rev. 7:14

Robert L. Thomas, *Revelation 1–7: An Exegetical Commentary*, ed. Kenneth Barker (Chicago: Moody, 1992), 497, n. 119.

"A...possible understanding that it is a departure after the Great Tribulation is completed (Marvin Rosenthal, *The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church* [Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1990], p. 185) can be dismissed because it neglects the ongoing nature of the departure indicated by the present participle ἐρχόμενοι and rests on an unwarranted distinction between the Great Tribulation and the day of the God's wrath."



Gerald B. Stanton

Kept from the Hour: Biblical Evidence for the Pretribulational Return of Christ
(Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1956; reprint, Miami Springs, FL: Schoettle, 1991), 390.

“However, the innumerable multitude is not like the Church, which goes to heaven as a group at the rapture. Rather, they are martyrs who one at a time lay down their lives throughout the seven-year period. The Greek present tense in Revelation 7:14 stresses that they ‘continually come’ out of great Tribulation, and obviously do not go to heaven as a single group. It is likewise strange, if they do represent the Church, that John could not recognize them, for John was an apostle of Christ, a member of the early Church, and part of its essential foundation. Also, the Church is composed of all believers since Pentecost, and cannot be limited solely to Tribulation martyrs.”

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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Matthew 24:31

“And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER [*episynagō*] His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.”



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1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷ 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. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words."



1 Corinthians 15:50-51

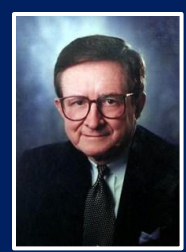
“⁵⁰ Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹ Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed.”



Matthew 24:31

“And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER [*episynagō*] His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.”





John A. Sproule

"An Exegetical Defense of Pretribulationism"
(Th.D. diss., Grace Theological Seminary, 1981), 53.

“Where does Paul mention the darkening of the sun (Matt. 24:29), the moon not giving its light (Matt. 24:29), the stars falling from the sky (Matt. 24:29), the powers of the heavens being shaken (Matt. 24:29), all the tribes of the earth mourning (Matt. 24:30), all the world seeing the coming of the Son of Man (Matt. 24:30), or God sending forth angels (Matt.24:31)?”



Paul D. Feinberg

"Response: Paul D. Feinberg," in *The Rapture: Pre-, Mid-, or Posttribulational*, ed. Richard R. Reiter (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 225.

“Notice what happens when you examine both passages carefully. In Matthew the Son of Man comes on the clouds, while in 1 Thessalonians 4 the ascending believers are in them. In Matthew the angels gather the elect; in 1 Thessalonians the Lord Himself (note the emphasis) gathers the believers. Thessalonians only speaks of the voice of the archangel. In the Olivet Discourse nothing is said about a resurrection, while in the latter text it is the central point. In the two passages the differences in what will take place prior to the appearance of Christ is striking. Moreover, the order of ascent is absent from Matthew in spite of the fact that it is the central part of the epistle.”

2 Thessalonians 2:1

“Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering (*episynagōgē*) together to Him.”



Preview of Matthew 24–25

- I. The problem
- II. The larger context
- III. The immediate context (23:37-39)
- IV. The Disciples' questions (24:1-3)
- V. The Tribulation's first half (24:4-14)
- VI. The Tribulation's mid-point (24:15-20)
- VII. The Tribulation's second half (24:21-22)
- VIII. The Second Advent (24:23-31)
- IX. Eight parabolic exhortations (24:32–25:46)



Matthew 23:37-39

³⁷ “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather [episynagō] your children together, the way a hen gathers [episynagō] her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. ³⁸ Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! ³⁹ For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, ‘BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!’”



Matthew 24:31

“And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER [EPISYNAGŌ] His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.”



Isaiah 27:13

“It will come about also in that day that a great trumpet will be blown, and those who were perishing in the land of Assyria and who were scattered in the land of Egypt will come and worship the LORD in the holy mountain at Jerusalem.”

RESTORATION
IS COMING!



Isaiah 11:11-12

“¹¹ Then it will happen on that day that the Lord Will again recover the second time with His hand The remnant of His people, who will remain, From Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath, And from the islands of the sea.¹² And He will lift up a standard for the nations And assemble the banished ones of Israel, And will gather the dispersed of Judah From the four corners of the earth.”



Matthew 24:36-41

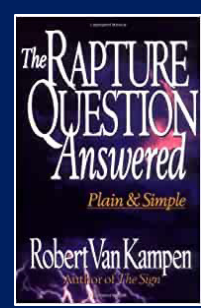
³⁶ “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. ³⁷ For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. ³⁸ For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and they did not understand until the flood came and **took (airō)** them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be. ⁴⁰ Then there will be two men in the field; one will be **taken (paralambanō)** and one will be left. ⁴¹ “Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be **taken (paralambanō)** and one will be left.”



John 14:1–4

¹ “Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. ² “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. ³ “If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and **receive you (paralambanō)** to Myself, that where I am, *there* you may be also. ⁴ “And you know the way where I am going.”

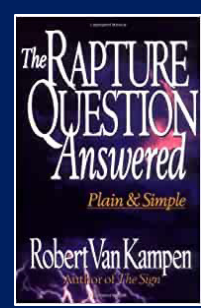




Robert Van Kampen

The Rapture Questioned Answered: Plain and Simple
(Grand Rapids: Fleming Revell, 1997), 181-82.

“But is that what the text really teaches? The Greek answers, ‘No!’ The Greek word behind took that is used in connection with Noah—‘the flood came and took them all away’—is from the Greek word *aírō*. But when Christ describes how it will be at ‘the coming of the Son of Man,’ when ‘one will be taken and one will be left,’ the Greek word for taken is entirely different. Here the Greek verb is *paralambánō*. That difference is both important and exciting! *Paralambánō* does not mean ‘to be taken away,’ as does the Greek verb *aírō*; it means ‘to embrace or to receive intimately, to or for oneself.’... Christ uses this word...in John 14:3...the most...



Robert Van Kampen

The Rapture Questioned Answered: Plain and Simple
(Grand Rapids: Fleming Revell, 1997), 181-82.

“...quoted of all Rapture passages in the New Testament..’ Receive’ translates paralambánō. Rather than picturing someone who is being taken away to judgment, this Greek verb conveys quite the opposite. Paralambánō means to intimately receive someone to oneself, as in the passage above. It would be more than a little confusing, then, if Christ used the word paralambánō five times to refer to the wicked being taken away to judgment—which is absolutely contrary to the real intent of the Greek verb—and then the last time used it to refer to the righteous being received in an intimate manner by Himself at the rapture of His saints!”

John 19:15-16

“¹⁵ So they cried out, “Away with Him [airō], away with Him, crucify Him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.” ¹⁶ So he then **handed Him over [paralambanō]** to them to be crucified.



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Conclusion

Pre-Wrath Rapturism

- I. Description of the view
- II. Six problems with the view considering prior Pre-Tribulational Arguments
- III. Four additional problems with the view

