

WHEN IS THE RAPTURE RELATIVE TO THE FUTURE SEVEN-YEAR TRIBULATION PERIOD?

- I. Four views
 - a. Pre-tribulationalism
 - b. Mid-tribulationalism
 - c. Post-tribulationalism
 - d. Pre-wrath rapturism
- II. Seven arguments favoring the pre-tribulational view
 - a. The purpose of the tribulation concerns Israel rather than the church (Jer 30:7; Dan 9:24)
 - b. There is an absence of any reference to the church on the earth in Rev 4-19
 - c. The church is promised an exemption from divine wrath (1 Thess 1:10; 5:9; Rom 5:9) and the tribulation represents a time of divine wrath (Rev 6:17; 11:18; 15:1, 7; 16:1, 19)
 - d. Because the rapture is imminent it must take place before the tribulation period can begin (Jas 5:8; 1 Thess 1:10; 4:15; 1 Cor 1:7; 15:51; Philip 3:20)
 - e. The doctrine of the rapture is designed to comfort believers (John 14:1; 1 Thess 4:18; Titus 2:13)
 - f. The Antichrist cannot come to power until the church's restraining ministry is removed (2 Thess 2:6-7)
 - g. Symbolic parallels mandate that the rapture must take place before the tribulation period begins (2 Pet 2:5-9)