

# END TIMES & THE RETURN OF CHRIST (PART 2)

*Sunday, February 17, 2019*

## Rapture

<sup>13</sup>Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. <sup>14</sup>For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. <sup>15</sup>According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. <sup>16</sup>For 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. <sup>17</sup>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. <sup>1</sup>Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, <sup>2</sup>for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. <sup>3</sup>While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. (1 Thess. 4:13-5:3)

- 1. The Rapture is connected with Christ's promise to return and take all believers to be with Him (John 14:3).**
- 2. The Rapture is connected with the resurrection of everyone who has died in Christ (1 Thess. 4:15-17).**
- 3. The Rapture (and the resurrection) will occur in connection with a trumpet call (1 Thess. 4:16; 1 Cor. 15:51-52).**
- 4. The Rapture will come suddenly and without warning (1 Thess. 5:2).**
- 5. At the Rapture, we will receive new bodies that are eternal (1 Cor. 15:42-54)**

<sup>42</sup>So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; <sup>43</sup>it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; <sup>44</sup>it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. ... <sup>50</sup>I declare to you, brothers and

sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. <sup>51</sup> Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— <sup>52</sup> in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. <sup>53</sup> For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. <sup>54</sup> When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.” (1 Cor. 15:42-44, 50-54)

## Pretribulational Rapture

### **1. The church is promised that it will not suffer the wrath of God (1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9; cf. Rev. 6:16-17).**

<sup>9</sup> For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thess. 5:9)

### **2. The church is not only promised exemption from wrath, but also from the time of wrath (Rev. 3:10).**

<sup>10</sup> Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth. (Rev. 3:10)

### **3. The church is not part of the 70th week of Daniel; the 70 “sevens” relate to Israel (“your people,” Dan. 9:24), not the church, so it is reasonable to see the church as excluded from this whole time frame (which includes the Tribulation). In fact, the church is not mentioned in Rev. 6-19.**

### **4. The Antichrist will not be revealed until the “restrainer” or “one who holds back” is removed (2 Thess. 2:6-8). The Restrainer is probably the Holy Spirit, who is the only one capable of restraining lawlessness, though he does it through the church (cf. Matt. 5:13ff). If the church is raptured, then the Restrainer will, in this sense, be gone, and the Tribulation will begin.**

<sup>6</sup> And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time. <sup>7</sup> For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. <sup>8</sup> And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming. (2 Thess. 2:6-8)

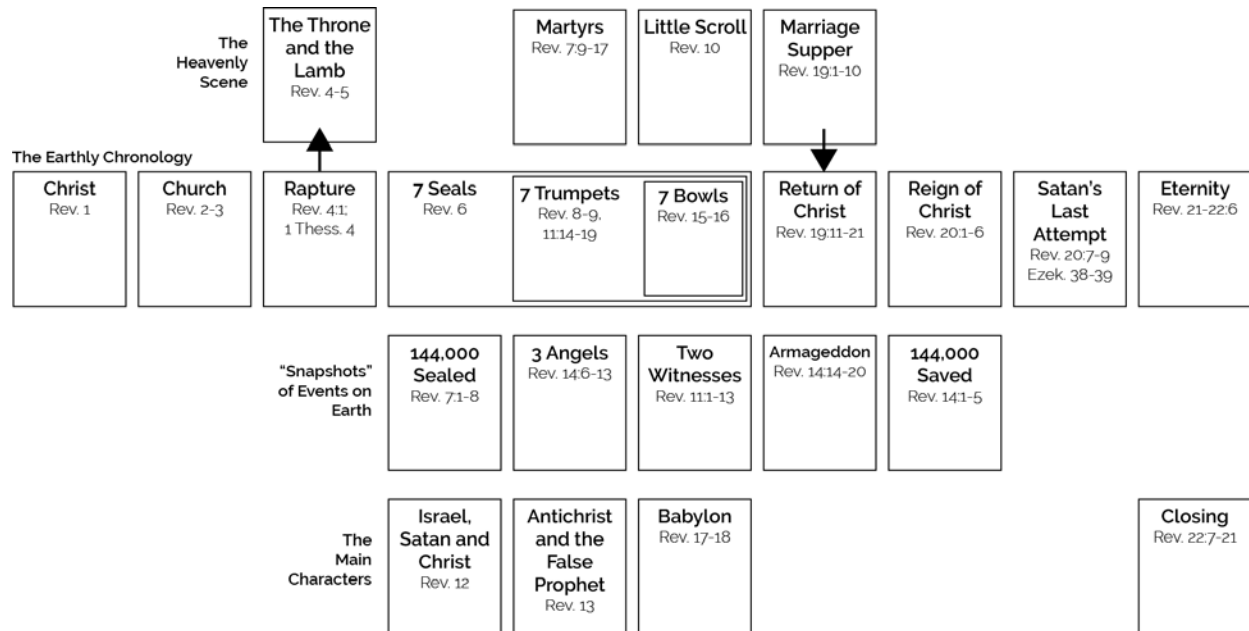
## Midtribulational Rapture

## Posttribulational Rapture

### Differences Between the Rapture and the Second Coming

1. **The Rapture is portrayed as a time of joyful reunion between Jesus and His saints (1 Thess. 4:13-18). The second coming is portrayed as the preliminary to an apocalyptic battle (Rev. 19:11-21).**
2. **In the Rapture, saints are portrayed as being "caught up" in the clouds (1 Thess. 4:17), but in the second coming, they are portrayed as coming from heaven to earth as an army (Rev. 19:14; cf. 19:8 for the identity of the army).**
3. **Jesus promises to return (at the Rapture) to take believers to be with Him in the place He has prepared for them (John 14:3), whereas the second coming happens on earth, and is not restful (Rev. 19:17-19).**
4. **At the Rapture, it is the saints who are in the clouds (1 Thess. 4:17), but at the second coming it is Jesus who is in the clouds (Matt. 24:30), and not the saints.**
5. **At the Rapture, it is Jesus who gathers the saints (1 Thess. 4:16-17), but at the second coming it is the angels who gather the saints together to return to earth (Matt. 24:31).**
6. **When Paul writes of the Rapture, the resurrection is his central point (1 Thess. 4:16). When Jesus speaks of the second coming, He doesn't even mention the resurrection (Matt. 24), and in Revelation it is not mentioned until after the second coming anyway (Rev. 20:4-5).**
7. **The fact that the Rapture is connected with a resurrection (1 Thess. 4:16) and the second coming is associated with a resurrection (Rev. 20:4-5) does not mean they are the same event, or the same resurrection.**
8. **The fact that there is a trumpet blast connected with both the Rapture (1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:16) and the second coming (Matt. 24:31) does not mean that they are the same trumpet blast, or the same event.**

## Outline of Revelation



### The Earthly Chronology

### The Heavenly Scene

After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.” (Rev. 4:1)

### Snapshots of Events on Earth

### The Main Characters

## The 70th Seven: The first Half

Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals. <sup>2</sup>And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, “Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?” <sup>3</sup>But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it. <sup>4</sup>I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. <sup>5</sup>Then one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.” (Rev. 5:1-5)

- 1. The week begins with the signing of a covenant (Dan. 9:27).**
- 2. The judgments of the seals, trumpets and bowls unfold in a telescopic sequence (cf. Rev. 8:1-2; 11:15-19).**

1st Seal (Rev. 6:1-2; Matt. 24:5; 2 Thess. 2:3-4)

I watched as the Lamb opened the first of the seven seals. Then I heard one of the four living creatures say in a voice like thunder, "Come!"<sup>2</sup> I looked, and there before me was a white horse! Its rider held a bow, and he was given a crown, and he rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest. (Rev. 6:1-2)

<sup>5</sup>For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Messiah,' and will deceive many. (Matt. 24:5)

2nd Seal (Rev. 6:3-4; Matt. 24:6-7a)

<sup>3</sup>When the Lamb opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!"<sup>4</sup>Then another horse came out, a fiery red one. Its rider was given power to take peace from the earth and to make people kill each other. To him was given a large sword. (Rev. 6:3-4)

<sup>6</sup>You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. <sup>7</sup>Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. (Matt. 24:6-7a)

3rd Seal (Rev. 6:5-6; Matt. 24:7b)

<sup>5</sup>When the Lamb opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come!" I looked, and there before me was a black horse! Its rider was holding a pair of scales in his hand. <sup>6</sup>Then I heard what sounded like a voice among the four living creatures, saying, "Two pounds of wheat for a day's wages, and six pounds of barley for a day's wages, and do not damage the oil and the wine!" (Rev. 6:5-6)

There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. <sup>8</sup>All these are the beginning of birth pains. (Matt. 24:7b-8)

4th Seal (Rev. 6:7-8; Matt. 24:7b)

<sup>7</sup>When the Lamb opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!"<sup>8</sup> I looked, and there before me was a pale horse! Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following close behind him. They were given power over a fourth of the earth to kill by sword, famine and plague, and by the wild beasts of the earth. (Rev. 6:7-8)

5th Seal (Rev. 6:9-11; 7:9-17; Matt 24:9)

<sup>9</sup>When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. <sup>10</sup>They called out in a

loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?" <sup>11</sup>Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the full number of their fellow servants, their brothers and sisters, were killed just as they had been. (Rev. 6:9-11)

"Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me." (Matt. 24:9).

### 6th Seal (Rev. 6:12-17; Matt. 24:7b)

<sup>12</sup>I watched as he opened the sixth seal. There was a great earthquake. The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair, the whole moon turned blood red, <sup>13</sup>and the stars in the sky fell to earth, as figs drop from a fig tree when shaken by a strong wind. <sup>14</sup>The heavens receded like a scroll being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place.

<sup>15</sup>Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and everyone else, both slave and free, hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. <sup>16</sup>They called to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! <sup>17</sup>For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can withstand it?" (Rev. 6:12-17)

There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. (Matt. 24:7b)

### **3. The 144,000 are sealed to survive the seven years (Rev. 7:1-4).**

After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth to prevent any wind from blowing on the land or on the sea or on any tree. <sup>2</sup>Then I saw another angel coming up from the east, having the seal of the living God. He called out in a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm the land and the sea: <sup>3</sup>"Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God."<sup>4</sup>Then I heard the number of those who were sealed: 144,000 from all the tribes of Israel. (Rev. 7:1-4)

"I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness;

I will take hold of your hand.

I will keep you and will make you

to be a covenant for the people

and a light for the Gentiles,

<sup>7</sup>to open eyes that are blind,

to free captives from prison

and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness." (Isa. 42:6-7)