



THE RAPTURE

SIGNS OF JESUS' SOON RETURN

Part 3

This lesson will conclude our study on the rapture and introduce the next topic - Resurrection.

First we will briefly review some of the things we have learned.

4 VIEWS OF REVELATION

- Idealist View
- Historicist View
- Preterist View
- Futurist View

Review

The Four Views of Revelation

In the Methodist tradition we believe that there are multiple ways to interpret Scripture, and Revelation is no exception. Rev. Daniel Humbert has outlined below four of the most popular understandings of the book of Revelation to help you read this book with more holistic comprehension. [CLICK HERE](#) to read more about the signs and symbols found in Revelation and the meanings behind them.

Gary's note – This article is written by a Methodist pastor. Methodists hold the view that scripture is

subject to individual interpretation.

<https://www.tmumc.org/stories/posts/the-four-views-of-revelation>

Futurist View of Revelation

FIVE KEY TEACHINGS:

- 1. Distinction between 2 covenant people – Israel and the church.**
- 2. Gap of thousands of years in Daniel 9 prophecy**
- 3. Church raptured prior to tribulation**
- 4. Kingdom was delayed by Jewish rejection**
- 5. Temple must be rebuilt.**

Key Teachings of the Futurist/Dispensational View:

1. A distinction between two covenant people: Israel and the church. God set aside Israel to work through the church. But will one day restore Israel and His covenant with them to fulfill to them all of the unfulfilled Old Testament Promises.
2. The Dispensational View is dependent upon the interpretation of Daniel 9 that sees a 'gap' of thousands of years in Daniel's prophecy. This gap postpones the last seven years of Daniel's prophecy thousands of years into the future.
3. The church will be taken up from the earth prior to a seven-year tribulation called a 'pre-tribulational rapture (or 'mid-' or 'post-' tribulational rapture) in order for God

1. to remove the church from the earth and restore the nation.
2. The Kingdom was delayed. The Jews rejected Jesus' offer of the kingdom so the kingdom offer was withdrawn from Israel and Jesus will physically return to earth and set up a 1000-year kingdom to reign from David's throne in Jerusalem.
3. Israel must rebuild the temple, reinstate the priesthood, and reinstitute animal sacrifices. The antichrist will make a seven-year peace treaty with Israel but break it in the middle of the tribulation when he walks into the temple and causes the sacrifices to cease.

The Positive aspects this view: This view is the most widely held and taught view in our modern time (the past 50 years or so). It is also the most "popular" view among Christians today spawning countless books and movies. The futurist view claims to take the events of Revelation more 'literally' than any other view.

Adherents to this view often harmonize current events with the events in the book of Revelation. This view shows a total completion of God's plan for the future of humanity and the earth.

The Critical aspects of this view: As covered earlier, the complete system of dispensationalism is a relatively new system of belief with views not held throughout the history of the church (Gap is Daniel's prophecy, pre-tribulational rapture, modern restoration of Israel).

This view renders the book mostly irrelevant to the original audience since it was not to be fulfilled for thousands of years in the future (it struggles to explain

the imminent time statements), and it also renders most of the book irrelevant to modern Christians since the Christians are raptured at 4:1 and will not be on earth during these events. This view demands a revival of many first century realities (restoration of Israel, rebuilt temple, reinstated priesthood and sacrifices, a revived roman empire and a world ruler.) This view also overemphasizes the importance of national Israel in God's plan and underemphasizes the importance of the church and New Covenant realities.

While an emphasis is placed on a literal interpretation, it fails to recognize the symbolic character of apocalyptic literature. This view lends more toward prophetic speculation than prophetic interpretation, affectionately called, 'Newspaper Exegesis'.

Historically, comparing prophesy with current events has been disastrous.

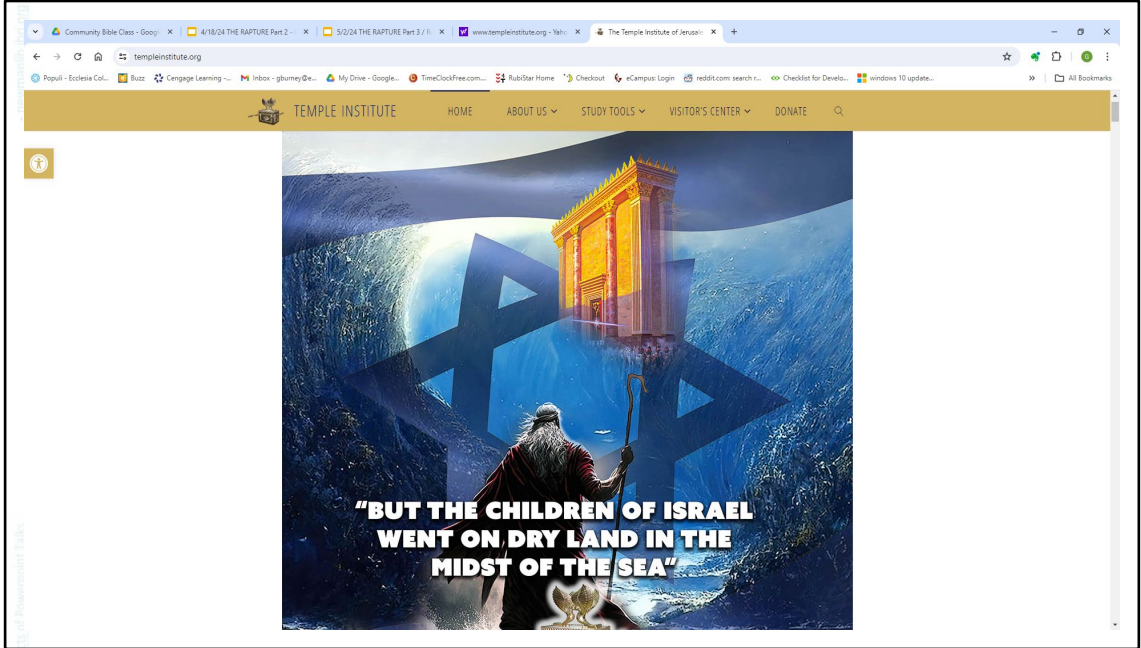
Gary's note: I do not agree with the author's final comments. We must take current events seriously. The sum total of these events show prophecy being fulfilled. The author seems to totally ignore his previous

statement *"This view demands a revival of many first century realities (restoration of Israel, rebuilt temple, reinstated priesthood and sacrifices, a revived roman empire and a world ruler.)" Specifically the first 4 of the six things he listed – Israel has been restored as a nation, plans are ready for the rebuilding of the temple, the priesthood has already been reinstated, and the sacrificial system is being rehearsed awaiting the red heifer. It isn't difficult to believe that the remaining 2 things will be fulfilled, especially with the current world situation.*

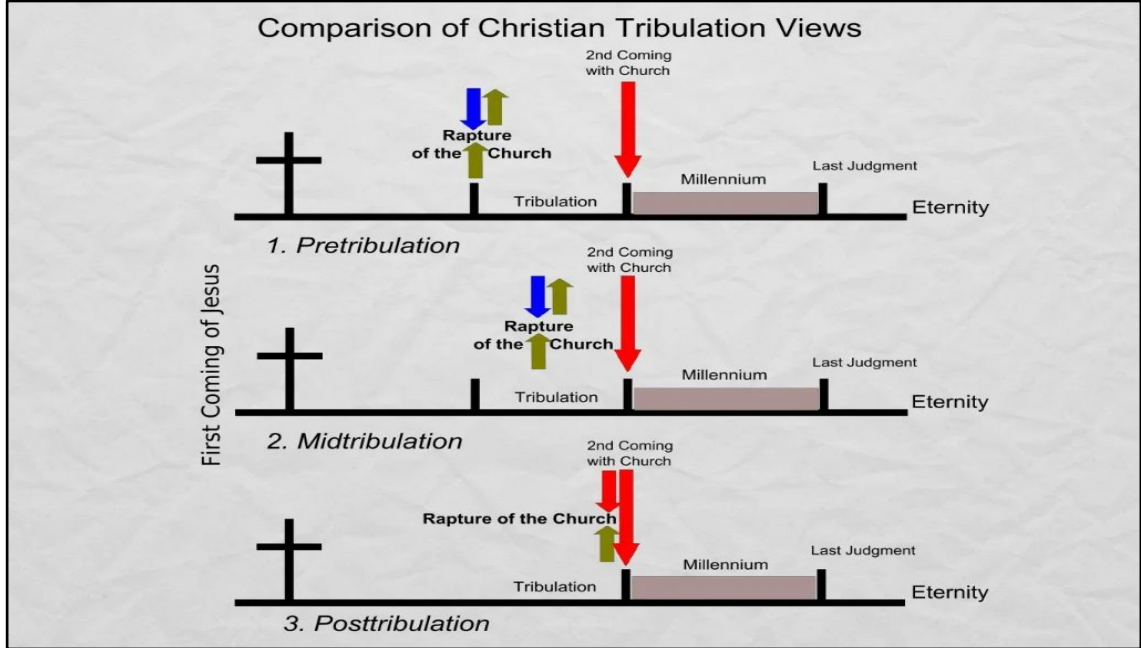
<https://www.tmumc.org/stories/posts/the-four-views-of-revelation>

November 4, 2021

For more information about the plans to rebuild the temple go to <https://templeinstitute.org/> . Remember as you view this site it is not a Christian site but an Orthodox Jewish site. Therefore, you are getting the first-hand Jewish perspective.



www.templeinstitute.org



Review

Among those that do believe there will be a rapture, there is diverse opinions as to when that rapture will occur.

These tend to all agree on the following:

1. There will be a future time of tribulation.
2. After that time of trouble, Jesus will return to establish His kingdom.
3. Believers will be translated from their mortal state to an immortal one – there will be a rapture (John 14:1-3, 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)

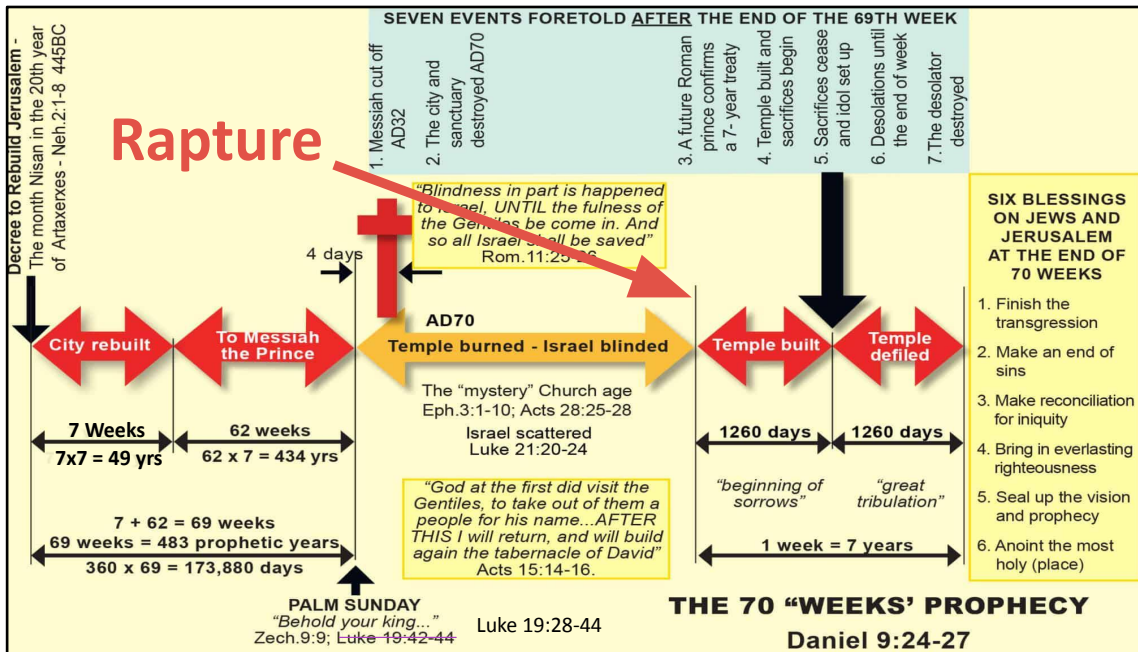
So, the question among these believers is when will this rapture happen?

There are three main views concerning the timing of the rapture.

1. Pretribulation – places the rapture before the tribulation (this is my

1. view)
2. Mid-tribulation – places the rapture at or near the midpoint of the tribulation.
3. Post-tribulation – places the rapture at the end of the tribulation.

The video - “Before the Wrath” gives added insight into the Pre-tribulation rapture by examining and explaining how the Galilean wedding is used throughout the Gospel of John as an illustration of Jesus’ relationship with His church and the events surrounding His coming to receive His “bride” the church.



Review

Daniel 9:24-27

“Seventy ^[a]weeks are determined
 For your people and for your holy city,
 To finish the transgression,
^[b]To make an end of sins,
 To make reconciliation for iniquity,
 To bring in everlasting righteousness,
 To seal up vision and prophecy,
 And to anoint ^[c]the Most Holy.

²⁵“Know therefore and understand,
That from the going forth of the command
 To restore and build Jerusalem
 Until Messiah the Prince,
There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks;
 The ^[d]street shall be built again, and the ^[e]wall,
 Even in troublesome times.

²⁶ “And after the sixty-two weeks
Messiah shall ^[f]be cut off, but not for Himself;
And the people of the prince who is to come
Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.
The end of it *shall be* with a flood,
And till the end of the war desolations are determined.
²⁷ Then he shall confirm a ^[g]covenant with many for one week;
But in the middle of the week
He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.
And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate,
Even until the consummation, which is determined,
Is poured out on the ^[h]desolate.”

THE RAPTURE

1. **John 14:1-3**
2. **1 Corinthians 15:50-57**
3. **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**
4. **Matthew 24:36-44**

Review

David Jeremiah reminds us "...Paul gained his understanding of the Rapture via special revelation from God – he called it a 'mystery' in 1 Corinthians 15:51.

Two of the above passages also deal with the resurrection of the saints.

One of the objections to the rapture is that the word rapture is not found anywhere in scripture.

Review

The next slide explains this.

THE MEANING OF “RAPTURE”

1. Rapture from Latin Vulgate translation of 1 Thessalonians 4:17 (rapiemur from rapio)

- Translate Greek “harpazo” to catch up or carry away.

Review

“The Greek harpazo occurs fourteen times in the New Testament with four variations of meaning, each of which contributes to our understanding of what Paul is describing in [1 Thessalonians 4:17].”

David Jeremiah - [What Is the Rapture? - David Jeremiah Blog](#)

THE MEANING OF “HARPAZO”

1. “to carry off by force”

- Christ uses His power to remove living and deceased believers from the last enemy, death.

Review

THE MEANING OF “HARPAZO”

2. “to claim for oneself eagerly”

- Christ purchased us with His blood, and He will return to claim those that are His.

Review

THE MEANING OF “HARPAZO”

3. “to snatch away speedily”

- The rapture will occur “in the twinkling of an eye” (1 Cor. 15:52)

Review

THE MEANING OF “HARPAZO”

4. “to rescue from danger of destruction”

- Supports the idea that the rapture will save the church from experiencing the terrors of the 7-year Tribulation

Review

MYSTERY OF LAWLESSNESS AND THE RESTRAINER

1 Thessalonians 2:5-8

Review

July/August 2019 [David M. Levy](#)

The Restrainer of Evil

[2 Thessalonians 2:6–8](#)

While establishing the church in Thessalonica, the apostle Paul personally instructed believers concerning future prophecy. In fact, he went into great detail about the Rapture of the church and the Day of the Lord.

However, being severely persecuted for their faith, many Thessalonians wondered if they were already experiencing the Day of the Lord's wrath. False teachers apparently had fabricated reports about the event, causing disruption and anxiety in the church and spreading great fear among these young believers who did not understand clearly what Paul had taught. Consequently, they became confused concerning the timing of certain prophecies. Paul assured the Thessalonians the Day of the Lord could not come until three events occurred:

1. The "falling away [apostasy]" ([2 Th. 2:3](#))

2. The revelation of the Antichrist, “the man of sin [lawlessness]” (v. 3)
3. The removal of the one “who now restrains” (v. 7)

We examined the first two events in the [previous article](#). Now we’ll look at the restrainer’s ministry.

The Restrainer Presented

The apostle appealed to the Thessalonians based on what they already knew about the restrainer: “And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way” (vv. 6–7).

The phrase *and now* draws attention to what the Thessalonians knew. The phrase *you know* speaks of their absolute knowledge concerning what Paul meant when he wrote of the restrainer.

The word *restrain* means “to withhold.” It is a neuter participle with a neuter article. Thus, the word does not refer to a person but, rather, to an abstract force or power that is holding back or holding down lawlessness in the world. However, verse 7 (“He who now restrains”) uses the masculine gender with a masculine article, referring to a person. Thus, in verse 6, Paul spoke of an impersonal principle or power of restraining, while in verse 7 he referred to a person who is restraining. Therefore, a person with extreme power is restraining both the man of lawlessness and evil in the world.

He is restraining so “he [the man of lawlessness, the Antichrist] may be revealed in his own time,” a time determined by God (v. 6). It should comfort us to know the evil in this world is completely under God’s sovereign control and is allowed for His purposes.

Even though the restrainer is working, “the mystery of lawlessness is already at work” in the world (v. 7). The word *mystery* does not refer to a mysterious or baffling event but, rather, to a prophecy in the Old or New Testament that has not been revealed to mankind. A mystery in the Bible is something that was hidden in past ages but will be divinely revealed at God’s choosing.

The word *lawlessness* does not mean a general outbreak of criminal activity. It refers to the specific lawlessness connected with “the lawless one” (v. 8)— the man of sin, the Antichrist, who will be energized and controlled by Satan.

So horrible will the Antichrist’s acts be once he is revealed that it would be impossible for humanity ever to understand the depths of his wickedness without God’s revelation.

This man has not been revealed yet; but Satan, the spirit controlling his career, already has operatives in the world (cf. [1 Jn. 2:18–22](#)). The apostle John boldly declared that people who deviate from what he taught possess the spirit of Antichrist (4:3).

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Paul indicated the restraining of lawlessness will end at a specific time: "He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way [midst]" ([2 Th. 2:7](#)), that is, until He is taken or disappears from the scene. When His work ends, the world will experience a Satanic onslaught of evil that will be unparalleled in world history.

[The Restrainer's Position](#)

Since the apostle never identified the restrainer, today's church does not know for certain who he is. Over the centuries, commentators have offered many views as to his identity. Suggestions have included Nero and other Roman emperors, the Roman Empire, Israel, human government, law, Elijah, Michael the archangel, Satan, Jesus Christ, the gospel, the church, and the Holy Spirit.

The restrainer must be able to hold back the evil manifested by Satan, who is "the god of this age" ([2 Cor. 4:4](#)). He must be more than a human force or human being because Satan is a spiritual being who functions in a supernatural realm that cannot be restrained by humans on Earth.

A popular position is that the church is the restrainer. True, the church is salt and light in the world. It does impact the world for good and restrains evil in many ways and in many areas of life. The church also dispels darkness and brings light to the world. But the church is not the ultimate restrainer of evil, as required by [2 Thessalonians 2:7](#). The restrainer must be more powerful than Satan. The Holy Spirit is the only Person who possesses the principle and power required to restrain Satan's wickedness until a time determined by God.

The Holy Spirit's restraining power is revealed in Genesis: God said, "My Spirit [Holy Spirit] shall not strive with man forever" ([Gen. 6:3](#)). One of the Spirit's ministries was to restrain Satan while Noah built the ark before the flood came. Another example was when God allowed Satan to take Job's health, possessions, and children but restrained him from taking Job's life ([Job 1:6—2:6](#)). Satan's ability to generate evil is completely controlled by God the Father through the Holy Spirit. Consequently, the Holy Spirit is the most qualified agent to restrain

Satan's villainy. As a member of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit is omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent and possesses the power to restrain the evil of Satan and the Antichrist.

The restrainer "will do so until He is taken out of the way [midst]" ([2 Th. 2:7](#)). At the Rapture of the church, the Holy Spirit's restraining ministry will cease. Mark it well: This does not mean He will be removed from the world; it simply means His ministry of holding back evil will cease.

The Holy Spirit has always been omnipresent; He will never be removed from the world. He will be here to empower God's servants for ministry during the seven years of Tribulation. A great multitude of people—who cannot be redeemed apart from the Holy Spirit's ministry—will be saved during this time ([Rev. 7:1–17](#)).

The Restrainer's Power

Paul provided a brief overview of both the Antichrist's evil work and his demise at Jesus' Second Coming: "And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming" ([2 Th. 2:8](#)).

The phrase *and then* refers to what happens once the restrainer stops holding back evil. At that time, the "lawless one [Antichrist] will be revealed." The reveal begins when "he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week" ([Dan. 9:27](#)). The "many" are Daniel's people, the nation of Israel. The Antichrist will posture himself as a peacemaker, and many (not all) in Israel will accept him as such.

This landmark event broadcasts to the world that the "lawless one" has stepped onto the global stage. Wickedness will run rampant and unhindered around the world under the Antichrist's brutal and demonic rule. He will claim to be God and demand to be worshiped, signifying that the time Paul was speaking about has arrived. The only escape is faith in Jesus Christ. However, many who turn to Christ will be martyred for their commitment to Him ([Rev. 7:14](#)).

At the Lord's Second Coming, the Antichrist's true identity as Satan's demonic pawn will be divulged. He and his pernicious worldwide reign will be cut short by the Lord, who will swiftly "consume" or overthrow him "with the breath of His mouth" ([2 Th. 2:8](#)). He will not wage a prolonged war against the Antichrist. All of the Antichrist's strength and authority combined with the supernatural power of Satan and his demons will be no match for Jesus Christ. The Lord will defeat him in an instant.

At His Second Coming, Christ will slay individuals and nations with His

breath or spoken word (cf. [Job 4:9](#); [Rev. 19:15](#)). This powerful picture describes the ease with which Christ will overthrow His archenemy and decisively end the Antichrist's devilish rule.

Jesus Christ will destroy the man of sin "with the brightness [splendor] of His coming [appearance]" ([2 Th. 2:8](#)). *Consume*, or *destroy*, does not mean annihilate but, rather, make the "lawless one" immobile, inoperative, and powerless. The "brightness of His coming" speaks of Christ's splendor, which will accompany His appearance. Christ's radiant glory will shine in a worldwide manifestation unlike anything the universe has ever seen. Such glory will immediately destroy the Antichrist and his power.

The visible appearance of the glorious Lord Jesus Christ, who is the "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS" ([Rev. 19:16](#)), will be so dazzling and overpowering that the lawless one's "kingdom" will immediately cease to exist.

What an awesome sight to behold! As believers, we will return with Him at His Second Coming to witness this spectacular event. Glory to God in the highest!

David M. Levy is a Bible teacher, author, former pastor, and the retired director of International Ministries for The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry.

EVENTS OF THE RAPTURE 1

THESSALONIANS 4:

1. V.16 – The Lord Descends
2. V. 16 – Dead in Christ rise first
3. V. 17 - Those who are alive will be caught up
4. V. 17 – Meet the Lord in the air
5. V. 17 – to be with the Lord forever

POST-RAPTURE EVENTS

1. The Tribulation/Great Tribulation
2. 2nd Coming
3. Millennium
4. Great White Throne
5. New Heaven and New Jerusalem

THE RAPTURE IS DIFFERENT FROM THE 2ND COMING.

1. Rapture sets in motion the end time events
 - 7 Year tribulation
 - 2nd coming

COMPARISONS BETWEEN THE RAPTURE AND THE
GLORIOUS APPEARING

Rapture

1. Christ Comes for
His Own

- John 14:3
- 1 Thess. 4:17

Glorious Appearance

1. Christ comes with
His Own

- Rev. 19:14

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COMPARISONS BETWEEN THE RAPTURE AND THE
GLORIOUS APPEARING

Rapture

2. He comes in the air

- 1 Thess. 4:17

Glorious Appearance

2. He comes to the
earth

- Zech 14:4-5
- Acts 1:11

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COMPARISONS BETWEEN THE RAPTURE AND THE
GLORIOUS APPEARING

Rapture

3. He comes to claim
His bride

- 1 Thess. 4:16-17

Glorious Appearance

3. He comes with His
bride

- Rev. 19:6-14

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COMPARISONS BETWEEN THE RAPTURE AND THE
GLORIOUS APPEARING

Rapture

4. Removal of believers

- 1 Thess. 4:17

Glorious Appearance

4. Manifestation of
Christ

Malachi 4:1-2

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COMPARISONS BETWEEN THE RAPTURE AND THE
GLORIOUS APPEARING

Rapture

5. Only His own see
Him

- 1 Thess. 4:13-18

Glorious Appearance

5. Every eye shall see
Him

- Rev. 1:7
- Matthew 24:30

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COMPARISONS BETWEEN THE RAPTURE AND THE
GLORIOUS APPEARING

Rapture

6. Tribulation begins

- 2 Thess. 1:6-9

Glorious Appearance

6. Millennial Kingdom
begins

- Rev 20:1-7

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COMPARISONS BETWEEN THE RAPTURE AND THE
GLORIOUS APPEARING

Rapture

7. Saved are delivered
from wrath

- 1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9
- Rev. 3:10

Glorious
Appearance

7. Unsaved experience
the wrath of God

- Rev 6:12-17

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COMPARISONS BETWEEN THE RAPTURE AND THE
GLORIOUS APPEARING

Rapture

Glorious Appearance

8. No signs precede the rapture

8. Signs precede the 2nd coming

• 1 Thess. 5:1-3

• Luke 21:11-28

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COMPARISONS BETWEEN THE RAPTURE AND THE
GLORIOUS APPEARING

Rapture

9. Focus: Lord and
Church

- 1 Thess. 4:13-18

Glorious Appearance

9. Focus: Israel and
kingdom

- Matt. 24

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COMPARISONS BETWEEN THE RAPTURE AND THE
GLORIOUS APPEARING

Rapture

10. World is deceived

- 2 Thess. 2:3-12

Glorious Appearance

10. [The Deceiver]

Satan is bound

- Rev. 20:1-2

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What's Next? - Resurrection

Eternal Life in:

- Heaven
 - Or
- Hell

Whether we die or whether we are taken at the rapture for the believer in Christ what's next is eternal life with Him.

But for the lost there is no rapture but eternal life still follows - only that life will be spent apart from Christ.

Both the saved and the lost will be resurrected and given new bodies - but the outcome of that resurrection is far different.

The Rapture vs Death

1. We don't know the day or the hour for either. (James 4:14)
2. Require the same preparation
3. Have the same results

Taken from David Jeremiah – see link:

[What Is the Rapture? - David Jeremiah Blog](#)

HOW SHOULD THIS IMPACT OUR LIVES?

1. Live with Expectation – Titus 2:11-14
2. Live with dedication – 1 John 2:28
3. Live with preparation – Titus 2:14

Taken from David Jeremiah – see link:

[What Is the Rapture? - David Jeremiah Blog](#)



Resurrection for the Saved means:

Eternal Life in:

- **Heaven**

Whether we die or whether we are taken at the rapture for the believer in Christ what's next is eternal life with Him.

Definition

Greek = Anastasis

- Standing up, i.e., a resurrection, a raising up, rising. (Strong's concordance)

Foundation of Christianity

- **The resurrection of Christ is the foundation upon which our faith is built.**

Without the resurrection of Christ we would not be raised - cp. 1
Corinthians 15

For Next Week

- **Read Chapters on Resurrection and Heaven in “Signs”**
- **Read 1 Corinthians 15**