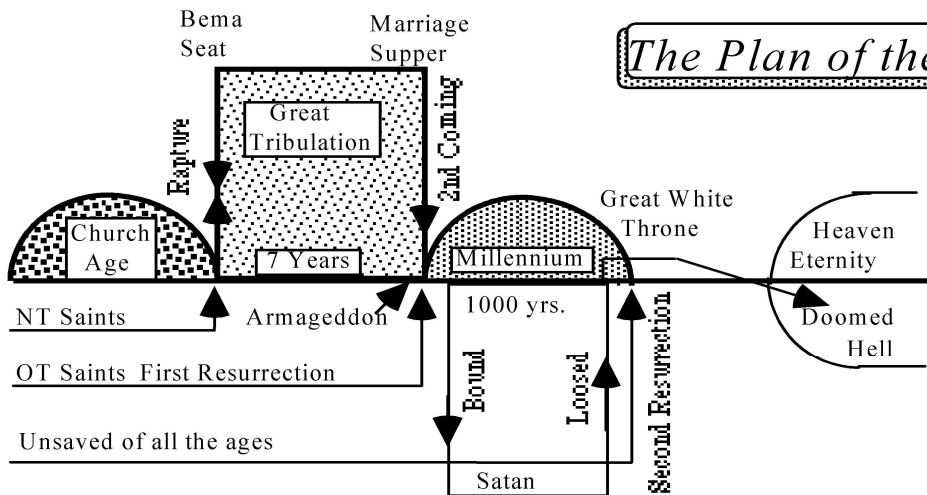


THE FUTURE MINISTRY OF CHRIST

INTRODUCTION



THE RAPTURE

- Definition: The supernatural removal of the church of Jesus Christ out of this world
- The word “rapture” is from the word *rapturo* which is the Latin translation of the Greek word “caught up” in 1 Thess 4:17
- ἀρπάζω= to snatch or catch away, a sudden, irresistible act of carrying off by force
- The Rapture is a new idea in the NT and not taught in OT

John 14:2-3 ~ 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. And 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

- This is the first mention of the Rapture in Scripture....the disciples knew about the return of Christ to set up His kingdom because Christ told them about that in Matthew 24:26-31
- But they knew nothing about Christ removing believers from earth and bringing them to heaven prior to the tribulation
- “My Father’s house” is certainly a reference to heaven and Jesus promises to prepare that place for believers and, having done so, He would come again to receive them into heaven

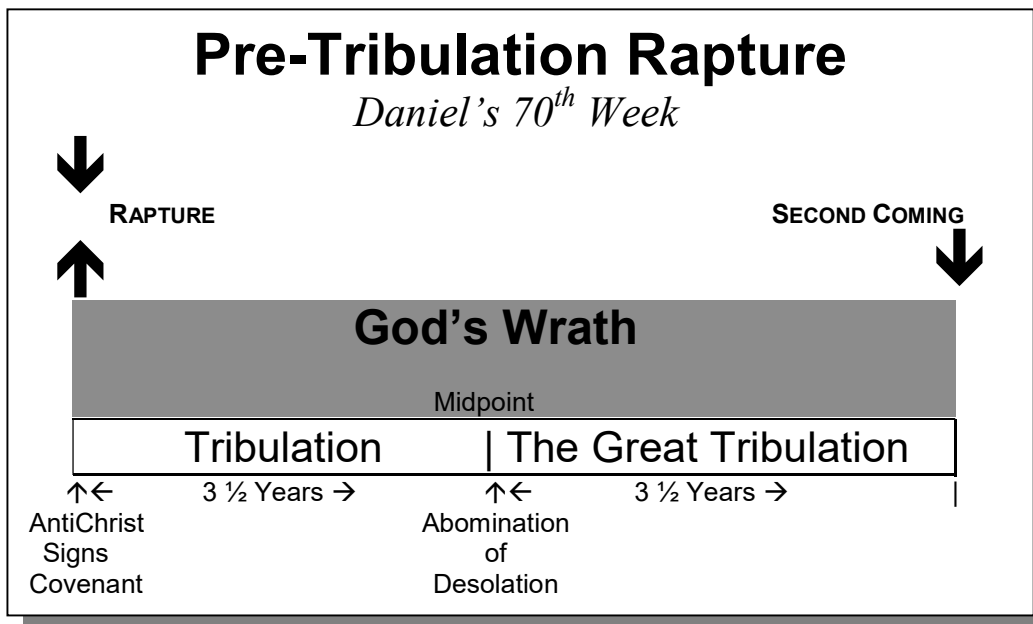
1 Thess 4:13-17 ~ But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 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. 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.

- The Thessalonians had come to believe in and hope for the reality of their Savior’s return
- They were living in expectation of that coming, eagerly awaiting Christ and knew that Christ’s return was the climactic event in redemptive history and didn’t want to miss it

- The major question they had was “What happens to the Christians who die before He comes? Do they miss His return?”
- So Jesus explains the order of events upon His return for his saints:
 1. Christ will leave his throne in heaven and descend to the air above the earth and 3 sounds will accompany this event: a) A shout from Christ; b) The voice of the archangel Michael; c) The sounding of the trumpet
 2. The bodies of believers who have already died will be raised first and their souls which have been with Christ in heaven will enter their resurrected bodies (in obedience to the command of Christ – John 5:28-29)
 3. A moment after the dead in Christ are raised, living Christians will be raised from the earth, given their glorified bodies
 4. Both groups of believers will then meet Christ in the air
- In this manner the entire church will be removed from the scene of the earth and will fulfill the promise of John 14 of being with Christ in the Father’s house in heaven
- Only those “in Christ” will be raptured...no unbelievers and no OT believers are involved in the Rapture

1 Cor 15:51-52 ~ Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 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 shall be changed

- “we shall not all sleep” is a euphemism for death...not all believers will die physically
- But all – both alive and dead believers – will be changed by receiving their glorified bodies
- This will happen “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye”
- So, the mystery is not that believers would be resurrected...the OT speaks of this (Daniel 12:1-2)
- Rather the mystery is that believers will be caught up with Christ in transformed bodies



- There are a number of supports for this view:
1. **Christ's return to rapture believers is imminent. There are no prior events that must occur. It is the next thing on the eschatological horizon.**
 - A pre-trib rapture preserves the imminency of Christ's return described in Bible
 - “imminency” is not a term found in Bible but it is used to describe the Bible's teaching that Christ can come at any time; the writers of the NT believed in imminency:

Philippians 3:20 ~ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ

1 Corinthians 1:7 ~ so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ

Philippians 4:5 ~ The Lord is near

- “Other things *may* happen before the imminent event, but nothing else *must* take place before it happens” – Renald Showers
- Christ’s imminent return to take believers to Himself is not same as a soon return; it may be imminent but not soon; it has already been 2000 years since His first coming
- This is important because the 2nd coming is not imminent in that certain events must occur prior to His return (i.e. the appearance of Antichrist – 2 Thess 2:3-4; the abomination of desolation – Matt 24:15)

2. God has promised that believers will not experience the wrath of God. Since the Tribulation is the wrath of God, believers will be exempted from this.

- The wrath of God is a unique time of worldwide destruction and supernatural power

Daniel 12:1 ~ Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands *guard* over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued

Joel 2:2 ~ A day of darkness and gloom, A day of clouds and thick darkness. As the dawn is spread over the mountains, So there is a great and mighty people; There has never been *anything* like it, Nor will there be again after it To the years of many generations

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 shall.

Revelation 6-18 describes this wrath: seals, trumpets, bowls; during the 7 year Tribulation

- But church saints are said to be exempt from God’s wrath:

1 Thessalonians 1:10 ~ And to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come. (this is not referring to hell because the context is 2nd coming)

1 Thessalonians 5:9 ~ For God has not destined us for wrath...

3. God promised to keep believers from a *worldwide testing*. There is no known such worldwide testing other than the Tribulation.

Revelation 3:10 ~ I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

- “keep from” = *tereook*
 - Those who hold to post-tribulationism say this means that believers will be preserved in the midst of the Tribulation – i.e. that the church will go through the tribulation and that God will preserve it during the tribulation so that the church will emerge successfully at the end of the hour of testing
 - But if that’s what John meant, he would not have used “keep from” (*tereook*)
 - He would have used “keep in, through” (*tereoen*, *tereodia*, or *tereoeis*) – occurs this way in Acts 12:5; 25:4; 1 Peter 1:4; Jude 21 (*tereoen* means “previous and continued existence within”)
 - It seems better to understand *tereook* as “continued existence outside” – i.e. to be kept completely from

- If *tereoeek* did mean “preservation within,” it contradicts the fact that some Tribulation believers will be martyred, i.e. not preserved – Rev 6:9-11; 7:9-14

4. The Scriptures are silent about the church in the Tribulation

- No Epistles mention the Great Tribulation...if believers will go through it, why is there no instruction?
- It is hard to believe that there is no instruction to the church in the Epistles on such a traumatic event if church really goes through it
- Also, there is no mention of the church after Revelation 3, suggesting that the church has been removed prior to the beginning of the Tribulation.
- Rev 1-3 mentions the church 20 times and once in 22:16 but it is never mentioned in Rev 6-19...if the church were to endure the Tribulation, Rev 6-19 would surely mention it

5. God has distinct programs for national Israel and the Church

- The covenants are made with Israel, therefore they must be fulfilled with Israel
- It seems logical that God would conclude His program with church before resuming His plan with Israel
- Romans 11:25 says church age goes until fullness of Gentiles is completed

Romans 11:25 ~For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in;

- A pre-trib rapture best preserves the distinction between Israel and the church

6. The purposes of the Tribulation do not include the church

- The primary purpose of the Tribulation is to prepare national Israel for its Messiah and the mediatorial, millennial kingdom; Israel is the focus of the Tribulation not the church

Jeremiah 30:7 ~ Alas! for that day is great, There is none like it; And it is the time of Jacob's distress, But he will be saved from it.

Zechariah 13:8-9 ~“It will come about in all the land,” Declares the Lord, “That two parts in it will be cut off and perish; But the third will be left in it.” And I will bring the third part through the fire, Refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them; I will say, ‘They are My people,’ And they will say, ‘The Lord is my God.’ ”

Matthew 24:15-20 ~ Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place...then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains;Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house.Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak.But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath.

- A secondary purpose of the Tribulation is to execute judgment on the wicked and take back the earth from Satan and his followers

Zephaniah 3:8-13 ~ “Therefore wait for Me,” declares the Lord, “For the day when I rise up as a witness. Indeed, My decision is to gather nations, To assemble kingdoms, To pour out on them My indignation, All My burning anger; For all the earth will be devoured By the fire of My zeal.” For then I will give to the peoples purified lips, That all of them may call on the name of the Lord, To serve Him shoulder to shoulder.” From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia My worshipers, My dispersed ones, Will bring My offerings.” In that day you will feel no shame Because of all your deeds By which you have rebelled against Me; For then I will remove from your midst Your proud, exulting ones, And you will never again be haughty On My holy mountain.” But I will leave among you A humble and lowly people, And they will take refuge in the name of the Lord.” The remnant of Israel will do no wrong And tell no lies, Nor will a deceitful tongue Be found in their mouths; For they

will feed and lie down With no one to make them tremble.”

7. There are several differences between passages dealing with rapture (1 Thess 4; 1 Cor 15; John 14) and those dealing with the 2nd Coming (Joel 3:12-16; Rev 19:11-21; Zech 14:1-5; Matt 24:29-31)

RAPTURE	2ND COMING
No judgment mentioned	Christ comes in judgment – 2 Thess 1:8
Christ comes for the saints – John 14:1-3	Christ comes with the saints – Jude 14
Christ stops in the air – 1 Thess 4:17	He descends to Mt. of Olives – Zech 14:4
The dead and living are given new bodies – 1 Cor 15:52; 1 Thess 4:16-17	Only dead OT saints get new bodies – Dan 12:1-2
Occurs before wrath of God is poured out	Occurs after wrath of Day of the Lord
Imminent	Preceded by signs
Believers removed, only unbelievers remain	Unbelievers removed, only believers remain

8. John 14:1-3 demands a pre-trib rapture

- John 14 refers to the rapture not an individual's homecoming
- Because a post-trib rapture demands that saints meet Christ in the air and immediately descend to the earth without experiencing what is promised in John 14, only a pre trib rapture satisfies the language of John 14

9. There is a need for an Interval of Time between the Rapture and 2nd Coming

- 3 future events seem to take place after the rapture but before 2nd coming:
 1. The Judgment Seat of Christ – 1 Cor 3:11ff; 2 Cor 5:10; bride has already received her rewards in Rev 19:8
 2. The Marriage Supper of the Lamb – Rev 19:7-9; believers are permanently united with Christ
 3. The salvation of people after the rapture who will then populate the earth during the millenium
 - At the rapture, all believers are removed, leaving no believers on earth
 - When Christ comes back, however, there are believers present (who are saved during the Tribulation)
 - These do not receive glorified bodies yet but do repopulate the earth during the Millennium

THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST

Romans 14:10 ~ For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God

2 Corinthians 5:10 ~ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad

1 Corinthians 3:10-15 ~ According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

The Nature of the Judgment Seat of Christ

- The word for “judgment seat” (*bema*) is a word that was used to refer to a raised platform from which speeches were made and where justice was administered

John 19:13 ~ Therefore when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out, and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha.

Acts 12:21 ~ On an appointed day Herod, having put on his royal apparel, took his seat on the throne (rostrum) and *began* delivering an address to them.

- Another meaning of this word refers to the raised platform on which an umpire or referee sat during the Olympic games and where winners of the various events received their rewards
- So, the “judgment seat” was not only a place from which justice was administered, it was also a place that rewards were given
- It is probably this meaning of the word that Paul has in mind when he says that all believers must appear before the judgment seat of Christ...It is a place of rewarding, not punishing

The Purpose of the Judgment Seat of Christ

- The Bema seat is not for punishing sin but for rewarding believers for their faithfulness in this life

2 Corinthians 5:10 ~ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

- The basis for our future judgment as believers is our present deeds
- God is going to evaluate us in the future on how we live now and each deed will receive what it deserves
- What is “good” refers to those deeds that were worthwhile, eternal, for the glory of God, what has lasting value
- What is “bad” refers to those deeds that were worthless, good for nothing, without any eternal value
- The purpose of the judgment seat of Christ is to reward those believers who have been faithful

1 Corinthians 3:10-13 ~ According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is *to be* revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work.

- These building materials represent the believer's works...Two categories of works emerge from this text.
- The believer's works are symbolized by two opposing categories, either gold, silver, or precious stones OR wood, hay, or stubble.
- The works represented by gold, silver, and precious stones refer to those works which are indestructible, done for the glory of God, in the power of God.
- The works represented by wood, hay, and stubble refer to those works which are destructible, done for the glory of man, in the power of man.
- One day God will test with fire the quality of materials with which we built on the foundation of Christ
- Fire is a symbol for Christ's probing, all-searching judgment that scrutinizes every aspect of our lives

The Result of the Judgment Seat of Christ

1 Corinthians 3:14-15 ~ If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire.

- Believers whose works stand the test of fire will receive a reward
- Paul doesn't say what the reward is here but the NT speaks of many rewards for faithful believers:
 - Greater opportunity to serve Christ in the future kingdom – parable of talents (Luke 19:16-19)
 - Special joy and fellowship with Christ (1 Pet 4:12-13)
 - Divine commendation for their faithfulness (Matt 25:21)
 - Crowns mentioned in the New Testament will be given to the faithful believers: an imperishable wreath (1 Cor 9:25), "the crown of exultation" (1 Thess 2:19), "the crown of righteousness" (2 Tim 4:8), "the crown of life" (James 1:12), or "the unfading crown of glory" (1 Pet 5:4).
- So there will be different levels of rewards in heaven
- But there will be some believers who have little or no reward in heaven
- The fire of evaluation consumed all the works represented by wood, hay, stubble and when the smoke clears, there is nothing left to reward
- The loss here is not the loss of salvation or heaven but the forfeiture of reward

THE MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB

Revelation 19:7-9 ~ Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready."It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.' " And he said to me, "These are true words of God."

- The Marriage of the Lamb follows the judgment seat of Christ but occurs prior to Christ's 2nd coming
- At this joyous occasion, church age believers are united with Christ forever
- Currently, the bridegroom (Christ) and the bride (the church) are separated, one in heaven, one on earth
- But at this celebration, the formal union of Christ and His church in an eternal relationship will occur
- A Hebrew wedding consisted of 3 parts:
 1. The Betrothal - a legally binding act which committed the man and woman to each other
 2. The Presentation – the festivities that preceded the ceremony
 3. The Ceremony – the exchanging of the vows
- The church was betrothed to Christ in eternity past
- The church will be presented to Christ at the Rapture
- The church will "exchange vows" with Christ at the final supper
- When that occurs, the promises of John 14:3 and 1 Thessalonians 4:17 are fulfilled

John 14:3 ~ 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.

1 Thessalonians 4:17 ~ 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.

THE SECOND COMING

Described

Zechariah 14:3-4 ~ Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south.

- The armies of the nations ruled by Antichrist will assemble against Jerusalem in the “valley of Jehoshaphat” (Joel 3:2, 12), probably the Kidron valley located between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives
- The Jews will realize that they are outnumbered and about to be destroyed by Antichrist’s armies
- They will no longer be able to defend themselves....their leadership will be unable to thwart Antichrist’s advances....they will be on the brink of defeat
- In fact, the Antichrist will think that he has all but conquered Jerusalem
- For the Jews all hope will be essentially lost...It is then that Christ will come and “go forth and fight against those nations” (vs. 3) and will personally intervene to fight against the gathered nations

Matthew 24:27-30 ~For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be. Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather. But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory.

- Christ’s return will be very noticeable, like lightning flashing in the sky (vs. 27)
- His return will follow the “tribulation of those days” (vs. 29)
- Remarkable events will occur when Christ returns (vs. 29)
- At the sight of Christ’s return, the “tribes of the earth will mourn” – probably a reference to the army of Antichrist knowing that their doom is certain

Revelation 19:11-16 ~ And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”

- This passage describes Christ’s coming in glory along with all church saints arrayed in white linen, poised and ready for battle
- As men tread grapes in a winepress, bringing stains of the crushed grapes on their garments, so will Christ tread out the blood of guilty men
- The King of kings and Lord of lords comes in power and authority!

Armageddon

Revelation 16:13-14, 16 ~And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs; for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty...And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon.

- Har-Magedon = in Hebrew “the mountain or hill of Megiddo” (located 60 miles north of Jerusalem)
- Megiddo Tel Megiddo, an ancient fortified city, is one of the most famous battlegrounds in the world. Historians believe that more battles were fought at this location than anywhere else on earth
- The valley of Megiddo, now known as the valley of Jezreel, will serve as the gathering place for the final battle between Christ and Antichrist’s
- Actually, the final battles will encompass the entire length of the nation of Israel
- The Battle of Armageddon is not a single battle, but a whole series of conflicts...The word used by John in Rev 16 to refer to the battle (*polemos*) indicates that Armageddon is really a campaign made up of numerous conflicts among a number of nations over a period of time at the end of the Tribulation
- Possibly Antichrist rules from Jerusalem during this time....possibly, despite his rule over whole world,

considerable unrest develops against his rule and people will begin to oppose Antichrist

- Nations begin to congregate in Palestine with the intention of overthrowing Antichrist
- But soon the “sign of the Son of Man” (Matt 24:30) appears in sky
- As nations realize Christ is coming back, they unite together to do battle against Christ

Revelation 19:17-19 ~ Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, “Come, assemble for the great supper of God, so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great.” And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army.

- This battle marks the pinnacle of the Day of the Lord, a frightening holocaust unparalleled in human history
- Those who assemble to make war with Christ will be executed
- The battle will begin with a summons to the birds of the air to feed on the corpses of those who will be killed

Antichrist and the False Prophet Cast into the Lake of Fire

Revelation 19:20-21 ~ And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

- Verse 20 tells the fate of the Antichrist (the beast) and the false prophet: they are cast alive into the lake of fire
- These are the same beast and false prophet referred to in Rev 13:1-4 (beast) and Rev 13:11-17 (false prophet)
- Their bodies are immediately transformed and they pass directly into the lake of fire
- They are the first of millions of ungodly men and fallen angels who are cast into the lake of fire
- The “lake of fire” is the final hell, the place of eternal punishment for all unrepentant rebels, angelic or human (cf. 20:10,15).
- That it is a place of fire and brimstone indicates that it is a place of divine judgment
- Verse 21 tells the fate of the armies of the Antichrist: they are killed by Christ
- Christ will kill the rest with the “sword which came from [his] mouth” – probably referring to Christ’s voice of authority...Christ’s words will go forth like a sword of destruction to cause their deaths
- Antichrist’s hosts will rise to fight, but with swords only drawn and not used, they will fall in death
- Those in Christ’s great army act only as observers, apparently not needing to fight at all

Jews in Israel Accept Christ as Messiah

- The terrible devastation of the Tribulation will have its desired effect on the nation: the stubborn, rebellious will of the Jews will be broken and they will seek the Lord their God and come to saving faith in Christ
- At the return of Christ, the Jews will finally see and believe that Jesus is the Messiah and will accept Him

Zechariah 12:10 ~ I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.

Zechariah 13:9 ~ And I will bring the third part through the fire, Refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them; I will say, ‘They are My people,’ And they will say, ‘The Lord is my God.’

Ezekiel 36:25-27 ~ Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.

Romans 11:26 ~ and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, “The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob.”

- The surviving Jews in Israel will give their allegiance to Christ their Messiah

Judgment of the Gentiles

- Those Gentiles still alive at the end of the Tribulation will be judged when Christ returns
- This is called the Sheep and Goats judgment... This judgment is for individuals, not nations

Joel 3:1-2 ~ For behold, in those days and at that time, When I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all the nations And bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat. Then I will enter into judgment with them there On behalf of My people and My inheritance, Israel, Whom they have scattered among the nations; And they have divided up My land.

Matthew 25:31-46

- All Gentiles will be gathered to the valley of Jehoshaphat to determine their spiritual condition
- The purpose is to see whether they are allowed to enter the Millennium
- The saved Gentiles (sheep) will be allowed into the kingdom in their earthly bodies and will be a part of repopulating the earth during the Millennium
- The unsaved Gentiles (goats) will be cast into hell
- The internal spiritual condition of Gentiles is revealed externally by the way in which they treated Israel or believers during the Great Trib
- No Gentile will place their life in jeopardy by dealing kindly with a Jew or a believer unless they were genuinely converted

Judgment of the Jews

- When Christ returns, He will defeat His enemies at Armageddon and will gather the people of Israel from all over the world to the land of Israel

Matthew 24:31 ~ And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

- Those Jews still alive at the end of the Tribulation will be judged when Christ returns to determine who are saved and who are unsaved.... This judgment was anticipated in the OT

Ezekiel 20:34-38 ~ I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out; and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will enter into judgment with you face to face. As I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you,” declares the Lord God. I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant; and I will purge from you the rebels and those who transgress against Me; I will bring them out of the land where they sojourn, but they will not enter the land of Israel. Thus you will know that I am the Lord.

- This judgment is described in the Parable of the 10 Virgins and the Parable of the Talents in Matthew 25

Matthew 25:1-30

- This judgment is also one of individuals not nations....Its purpose is for determining who is allowed to enter the Millennium...Christ determines which are saved and which are unsaved
- The saved Jews (wise virgins) are allowed to enter; they will enter the kingdom in their earthly bodies and will be part of repopulating the earth during the Millennium
- The unsaved Jews (foolish virgins) are not allowed to enter
- Therefore the Millennial kingdom begins with only believers

Resurrection of Old Testament and Tribulation Saints

- There are two groups of people resurrected at Christ's 2nd coming: OT Saints and Tribulation saints
- These believers who died either in the Tribulation or millenniums earlier in Old Testament times will be rewarded when raised from the dead

Daniel 12:2 ~ And many of those who sleep will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.

- The context of this text is the Tribulation and refers to a resurrection that occurs immediately after the resurrection
- Although this verse talks about resurrection of BOTH righteous and unrighteous without indicating any time exists between the two, when this verse is combined with Revelation 20:4-6, the time interval is obvious: the righteous are raised before the Millennium and the unrighteous are raised after it
- Daniel 12:2 does not definitely identify these people as OT saints but Daniel 12:13 shows it must be ~ But as for you, go your way to the end; then you will enter into rest and rise again for your allotted portion at the end of the age.
- Daniel was promised a resurrection at "end of the age"
- The context says that the "end of the age" is the end of the Tribulation
- If Daniel, an Old Testament saint, is raised at that time, then it is logical to conclude that the rest of the OT saints will be as well
- A further reason for placing resurrection of OT saints at end of the Tribulation is that this period is more consistent with OT times than the rapture of church saints

Revelation 20:4-6 ~ Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.

- Those who had not worshiped the beast "came to life"
- The phrase "the rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed" (vs. 5) is a parenthesis and refers to the second death/resurrection after Millennium → Great White Throne
- The "first" resurrection refers to a category of resurrected people rather than a chronological order; "First" refers to kind not sequence
- Only believers are resurrected in the first resurrection and it has multiple phases:
 - Christ at His resurrection
 - Those who rose after Christ's resurrection (Matt 27:52-53)
 - Purpose was probably to provide further support for Christ's resurrection
 - These people were probably well known to those still living and did not die again (like Lazarus)
 - Probably taken directly to heaven
 - Church saints at Rapture
 - Two witnesses in middle of Tribulation

- OT/Tribulation saints at 2nd Coming
- (Millennial saints who died?? – Bible does not say)
- Only unbelievers are resurrected in second resurrection/death (Rev 20:6, 11ff)

Satan is Bound

Revelation 20:1-3 ~ Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.

- During the present age, Satan has freedom to move about as he wishes; however, when Christ returns, he will be cast into the abyss and kept there for the entire 1,000 year Millennium
- At the end of the Millennium, Satan is let loose for a little season to go forth and deceive the nations

Revelation 20:7-8 ~ When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore.

- He is somewhat successful at first, being able to gather an army to move against the forces of God
- However, fire is sent from God, the army is devoured, and Satan himself is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are

Revelation 20:9-10 ~ And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Christ's Kingdom is Established

- When Jesus comes again, He returns as King of kings with the purpose of reestablishing the throne of David and fulfilling the Davidic Covenant
- It is God's purpose to establish a kingdom that will last forever

2 Samuel 7:16 ~ Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.

- Jesus has never sat upon the throne of David to fulfill this covenant, but that will change when he returns
- There will be a 75-day period between the return of Christ and the actual beginning of the millennial kingdom

Daniel 12:11-12 ~ From the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days. How blessed is he who keeps waiting and attains to the 1,335 days!

- 1260 days from abomination of desolation to 2nd coming
- 1290 days must indicate 30 days for judgments
- 1335 days must indicate 45 days to set up kingdom
- These 75 days are necessary for preparing for the millennial kingdom and will involve such things as the removal of the abomination of desolation from the Temple, the judgments of those who made it through the tribulation alive (see above), and the resurrection and rewarding of the Tribulation and OT saints
- With these and other matters settled during this 75 day period, the Messianic age can begin