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B0523 – June 12, 2005 – Major Bible Themes
Chapter 13 – God the Son: His Coming with His Saints

Last week we looked at Christ's coming *for* His saints and this week we will look at the distinct event of Christ's coming *with* His saints. Remember, last week I told you that many Bible students see the rapture and 2nd coming as distinct.

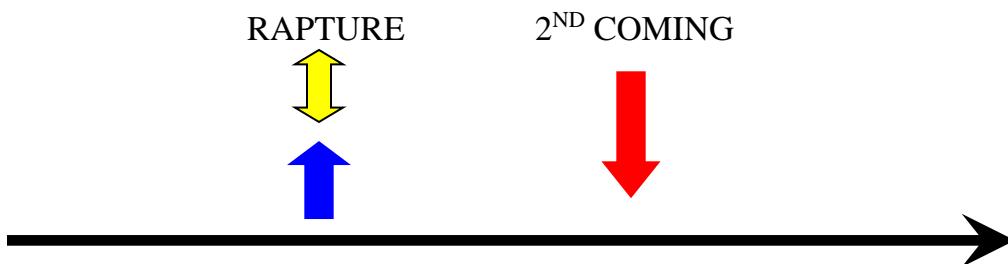


Fig 1 Pre-Tribulationism, Mid-Tribulationism, Pre-Wrath Rapture

Others see these two events as simultaneous.

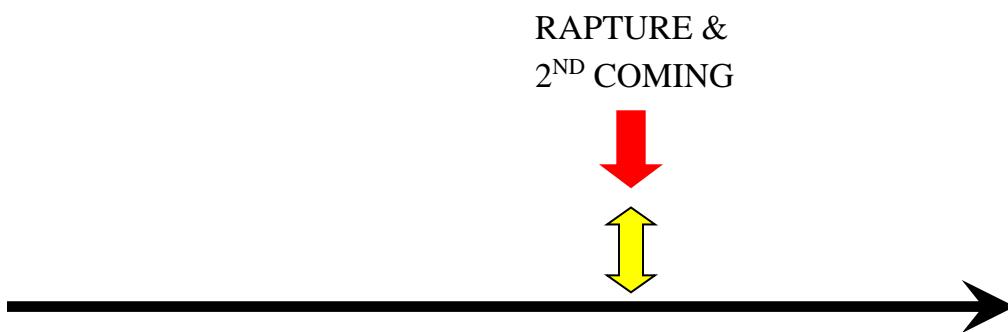
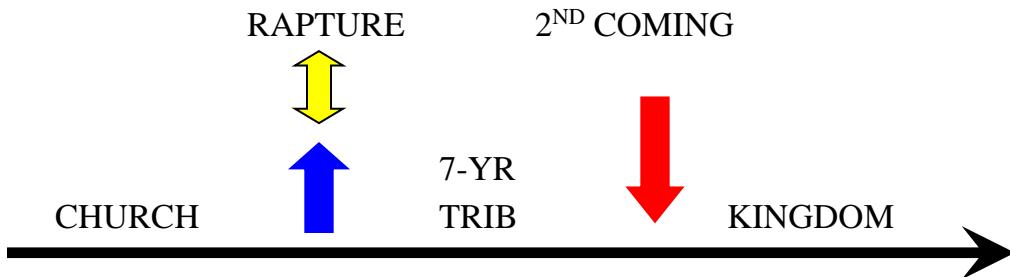


Fig 2 Posttribulationism, Covenant Amillennialism, Covenant Postmillennialism, and Covenant Premillennialism

The difference between Fig 1 and Fig 2 really boils down to literal interpretation. After careful analysis of the arguments and exegesis of the important passages I have concluded

that a consistent literal interpretation leads to Pre-Tribulationism, meaning that the rapture will take place *before* the *Tribulation* so that the diagram would look like this:



We studied the word “rapture” last week and found that it means “the snatching away and re-locating of someone or something”. In the case of the Church she is suddenly snatched away from earth and re-located in heaven. That’s what John 14:1-3, 1 Thess 4:13-18 and 1 Cor 15:51-58 were teaching. Those are the three major passages on the rapture. Putting those three passages together we get the following sequence of events.ⁱ

1. Christ will descend with a shout and blast of a trumpet from the Father’s house in heaven to the air above the earth (Jn. 14:1-3; 1 Th. 4:16-17).
2. When these church saints died, their spirits left their bodies and went to be with the Lord in heaven (2 Cor. 5:6-8; Phil 1:21-23). The spirits of dead church saints will therefore descend from heaven with Christ at this coming (1 Th. 4:14).
3. The bodies of dead church saints will be raised as immortal, incorruptible bodies and will be reunited with their returning spirits (1 Cor 15:42-44, 52-53; 1 Th. 4:14-16).
4. The bodies of church saints who have not died before this coming of Christ will be changed instantly into immortal, incorruptible bodies (1 Cor. 15:51-53).
5. Both the resurrected and changed church saints will be caught up together to meet Christ in the air (1 Th. 4:17; Jn. 14:3)
6. All church saints will then return with Christ to His Father’s house in heaven to dwell with Him in dwelling places He has prepared there for them (Jn. 14:2-3).

These changes will all take place in the “twinkling of an eye” (a period of time so short that it cannot be cut or divided). From that point forward we will forever be with the Lord. Where He goes we will go.

This week we are looking at what many Bible students consider a distinct event, the 2nd Coming. Christ will not be coming to meet Church saints in the air and take them back to heaven but will be coming *with* Church saints and His Angels to the earth.

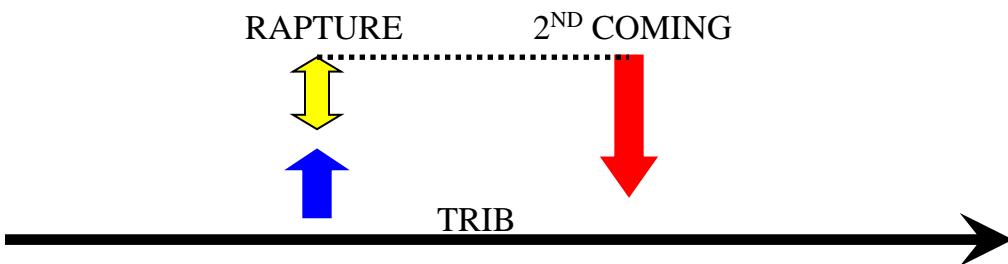


Fig 1 Pre-Tribulationism, Mid-Tribulationism, Pre-Wrath Rapture

However, these two events are often confused.

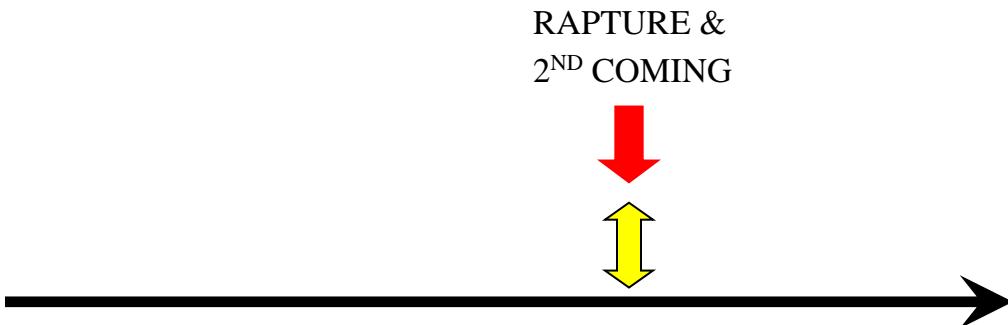


Fig 2 Posttribulationism, Covenant Amillennialism, Covenant Postmillennialism, and Covenant Premillennialism

To be a dispensationalist one must hold to the pre-trib Rapture. Every other view confuses Israel and the Church by intermingling the Church and Israel during the Tribulation. Yet Gabriel told Daniel that “*Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city,*” (Dan 9:24). Who were Daniel’s people and what was Daniel’s holy city? Israel and Jerusalem. Therefore, all 70 weeks, including the 70th week of Daniel are for Daniel’s people, Israel, and for Daniel’s holy city, Jerusalem. Therefore the Church cannot be in the Tribulation. It is not decreed for the church but for Israel. “*Israel*” is used 73 times in the NT and not once is it equated with the Church or identified as the Church. All 73 uses are consistently used of the descendants of Jacob. Sure, Church saints are Abraham’s spiritual seed but we are never called the descendants of Jacob. That is what one must demonstrate

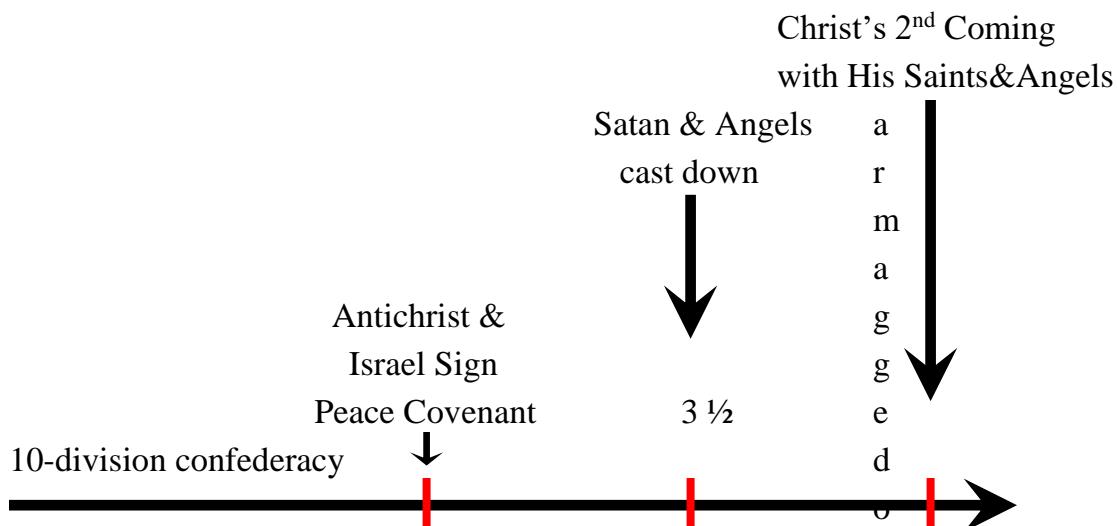
to prove that Israel and the Church are the same people. No one has ever shown that (cf Fruchtenbaum's 1100 page tome on *Israelology*). That's because the Bible doesn't teach it. The Church and Israel are distinct peoples and since the Tribulation is for Israel and Jerusalem they cannot mix during this time period. That is why I say that all dispensationalists must hold to a pre-tribulation rapture.

Today we are looking not at the pre-tribulation rapture but the Premillennial coming of Christ, meaning Christ will come *before* the millennium. "*But immediately after the tribulation of those days...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*" (Matthew 24:29-30). Before we look at the 2nd Coming of Christ lets look at some of the...

Important Events Preceding the Second Coming of Christ

First, before the 7-year Tribulation begins a 10-division confederacy will form which will ultimately be controlled by the Antichrist (Rev 17:12-13). Once the Antichrist has become world dictator He will sign a firm covenant with the leaders of the nation of Israel promising peace (Dan 9:27). The signing of that document will mark the beginning of the Tribulation.

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."



Antichrist becomes World Dictator
70th Week of Daniel Begins n
Abomination of Desolation

The 7-year Tribulation is also known as the Birth Pangs of the Messiah because it will give birth to the Messianic Kingdom. It is also known as the Day of Distress, the Day of Trouble, and was known by the Rabbi's as the 'Messianic woes' (Matt 24:8; Rev 6:1-11; Jer 16:19). The peace promised by the Antichrist will be broken in the midst of the Tribulation when he exalts himself in the Tribulation Temple and proclaims that all men worship Him an act described as the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION (Dan 9:27; 12:11; Matt 24:15) and which Jesus warned would signal a time of unparalleled destruction. At this same time in heaven, Satan and his angels will be cast out of heaven down to earth. Satan himself will indwell the Antichrist who will then attempt to utterly destroy Israel (Matt 24:16-21; Rev 12:13). But God will protect Israel during this time by sheltering her in the wilderness region known as Bozrah (either the modern city of Buseira or the ancient city of Petra) (Micah 2:12 ASV). God's protection of Israel will anger Satan and the Antichrist so that they will persecute the saints of God on earth who worship and obey God (Rev 12:17). The armies of the world will assemble for the final battle by gathering at the place known as Har-mageddon (Rev 16:16). At the close of this war Christ will swoop down from heaven delivering Israel and destroying the Antichrist, casting him and Satan into the lake of fire (Isa 14:16ff; Rev 19:11-20). Then He will destroy the rest of the armies of the Antichrist (Rev 19:21). These events describe what will happen before the 2nd Coming of Christ but after the Rapture of His Church. Therefore these are two distinct events

Vital Facts Relating to the Second Coming

The Lord Jesus Christ will return to the earth (Zech 14:4) in His resurrected physical body on the clouds of heaven.

Acts 1:9-11 And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. ¹⁰ And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. ¹¹ They also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven."

Notice that the ascension took some time. They were "gazing intently into the sky while He was going" and He was "received" into a "cloud". His return will be in just the same

way. He will come "with the clouds" and it will take some time for Him to reach earth. It will be a slow descent so that everyone will see.

Matthew 24:26-30 "So if they say to you, 'Behold, He is in the wilderness,' do not go out, or, 'Behold, He is in the inner rooms,' do not believe *them*. ²⁷ "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. ²⁸ "Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather. ²⁹ "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. ³⁰ "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.

His return will be accompanied by the armies of heaven both angels (horses) and church saints.

Revelation 19:11-16 ¹¹ 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. ¹² 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. ¹³ *He is* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴ And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white *and* clean, were following Him on white horses. ¹⁵ 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. ¹⁶ And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

Matthew 24:31 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.

The place where Christ will first touch down on the earth will be the Mount of Olives (Zech 14:1-4). At the moment His feet touch the Mount of Olives it will split in two forming a great valley extending from Jerusalem east to the Jordan valley. At this moment the Tribulation will have already ended. Between the Tribulation and the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom there will be a period of 75 days (Dan 12:12).



The first 30 of these days will be reserved for three events: 1) the final regathering of Israel, 2) Israel's judgment, and 3) Gentile's judgment (aka Sheep-Goat's judgment). *First,* Israel will be regathered from all over the world by angels.

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.

All Israel that will be gathered will be saved Israel.

Romans 11:26-27 and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, "THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB." ²⁷ "THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS."

What will happen is that during the last three days of the Tribulation Israel will call upon the name of the Lord and be saved (Hos 6:1-2). This national salvation will stimulate the 2nd Coming of Jesus, their Messiah (cf Matt 23:39).

Hosea 6:1-3 "Come, let us return to the LORD. For He has torn *us*, but He will heal us; He has wounded *us*, but He will bandage us. ² "He will revive us after two days; He will raise us up on the third day, That we may live before Him. ³ "So let us know, let us press on to know the LORD. His going forth is as certain as the dawn; And He will come to us like the rain, Like the spring rain watering the earth."

During the Tribulation 2/3 of Israel will have been physically killed and 1/3 will have been purged to believing in the Messiahship of Jesus and will be saved.

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. 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.'"

Second, the Gentile nations will be gathered and judged at what is known as the Sheep/Goats judgment.

Matthew 25:31-46 "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. ³² "All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; ³³ and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. ³⁴ "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ³⁵ 'For I was hungry, and you gave Me *something* to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me *something* to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; ³⁶ naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.' ³⁷ "Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You *something* to drink? ³⁸ 'And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? ³⁹ 'When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' ⁴⁰ "The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, *even* the least of *them*, you did it to Me.' ⁴¹ "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; ⁴² for I was hungry, and you gave Me *nothing* to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; ⁴³ I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.' ⁴⁴ "Then they themselves also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?' ⁴⁵ "Then He will answer them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' ⁴⁶ "These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

The basis of the judgment is the Gentiles treatment of Israel. If they treated her well during the Tribulation it is an indication that they had believed in Jesus as Messiah and have eternal life. If they treated her badly during the Tribulation it is an indication that they had not believed in Jesus as Messiah and do not have eternal life. The sheep are the believers and will be admitted to the kingdom to re-populate the Gentile nations. The goats are the unbelievers and will go away into the eternal fires of punishment (v 41).

After these 30 days there will be a period of 45 days when Christ will build His new Millennial Temple and set up His government (Dan 12:11). The blessed Millennium will

then begin on the 1,335th day since the Abomination of Desolation. At this moment the earth will contain only believers (just as when Noah, Shem, Ham, Japheth, and their wives got off the Ark). These believers will re-populate the earth. We will be there as immortals. So, there will be a future time in history when mortals and immortals will live together. That time is known as the Millennial Kingdom and there will be perfect peace on a restored earth for 1,000 literal years.

His Coming for His Saints	His Coming with His Saints
Removal from earth	Return to earth
Imminent	Signs
Comfort	Judgment
Mystery	Revealed
Creation unchanged	Creation changed
Church	Jews and Gentiles
Church judged in heaven	Gentile nations judged on earth
Israel's covenants unfulfilled	Israel's covenants fulfilled
Before day of wrath	After day of wrath
Lord is at hand	Kingdom is at hand
He comes in the air	He comes to the earth
Relates to saved only	Relates to saved and unsaved
Only believers will see Him	Every eye will see Him
Tribulation immediately follows	Kingdom immediately follows
Satan immediately becomes very active	Satan immediately bound

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ⁱ Adapted from Renald Showers, *Maranatha: Our Lord Come!* (Bellmawr, NJ: The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc., 2001), 12-13.