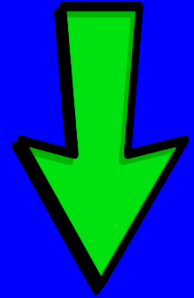


LIVING FOR HIS RETURN



Part 2: Events Related to His Return

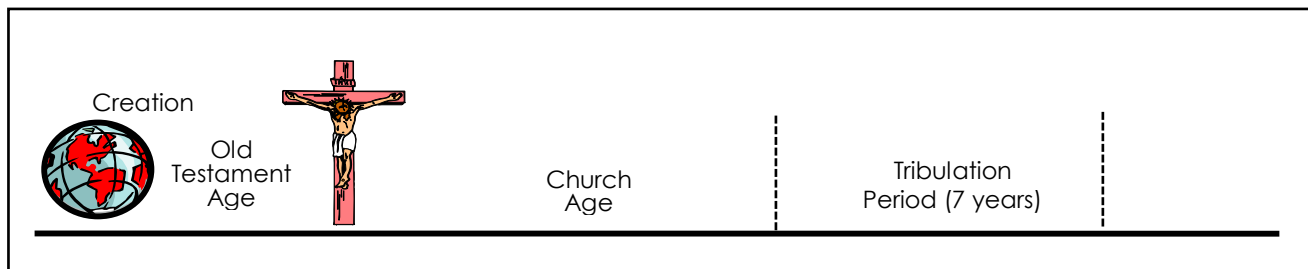
Evangelicals who hold to various positions about future major events all agree that Scripture is inerrant, and they have a commitment to believe whatever is taught by Scripture. Their differences concern the interpretation of various passages relating to these events, but their differences on these matters should be seen as matters of secondary importance, not as differences over primary doctrinal matters.

Though not all theologians agree on the exact sequence of the following future biblical events, all do agree that they are important to the believer in understanding God's plan of the ages

I. WHAT IS THE TRIBULATION?

DEFINITION: An expression from Matthew 24:21 referring to a period of great hardship and suffering prior to the return of Christ (Grudem)

"For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will." Matthew 24:21 (NAU)



A. Throughout Scripture, the Tribulation is referred to by other names such as:

1. "The Day of the Lord" (Isaiah 2:12; 13:6, 9; Joel 1:15, 2:1, 11, 31, 3:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:2)
2. "Trouble" or "tribulation" (Deuteronomy 4:30; Zephaniah 1:1)
3. "Great Tribulation" which refers to the most intense second half of the 7-year period (Matthew 24:21)
4. "Time or day of trouble" (Daniel 12:1; Zephaniah 1:15)
5. "Time of Jacob's trouble" (Jeremiah 30:7)

B. The Tribulation Period will be different from all other periods in history.

1. First, it will be worldwide (Rev. 3:10).
2. Second, it will be different because of the way people will act. As the judgments of the Tribulation unfold, some call on the mountains to fall on them in order to flee from God's wrath (Rev. 6:16).

C. The length of the Tribulation is seven years. This is determined by an understanding of the seventy weeks of Daniel (Daniel 9:24-27).

D. Charles Ryrie believes the period begins with the signing of a seven-year covenant between the leader of the Ten-Nation Federation and the Jewish people (Dan. 7:7-8; 9:27). It ends when Jesus Christ returns (Rev. 19).

1. The book of Revelation contains more about this period than any other book in the Bible.
2. It not only contains more about this period but most of the book itself addresses this period (Rev. 6—19), and with it the three series of seven judgments, culminating in the battle of Armageddon (Rev. 19):
3. The Tribulation will discipline the nation of Israel (Dan. 9:24), and it will be God's judgment of the unbelieving inhabitants of the earth (Rev. 6—18)

II. WHAT IS THE RAPTURE?

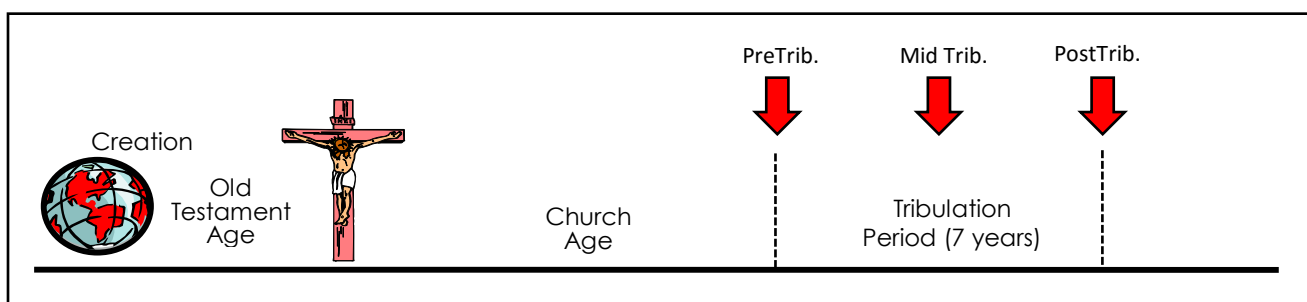
"For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be *caught up* together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words." 1 Thess. 4:16-18

- A. The rapture is the catching away of the church from earth to heaven (1 Thess. 4:17)
1. While the word "rapture" does not occur in the Bible, its use in describing what takes place when the Lord Jesus returns is most appropriate.
 2. The word "rapture" is taken from a Latin word *rapere* which means to snatch out of the way, as one would snatch a person out of the way of an oncoming automobile.
 3. It is based on the words "caught up" in I Thessalonians 4:17.
 4. The second coming of Christ can be viewed as one transcendent event which has two stages.

B. When Will the Rapture Take Place?

Bible scholars are divided on precisely when the Rapture will occur. There are four views on this.

1. Post-Tribulation Rapture View: The church (believers) will be raptured *after* the seven-year Tribulation Period.
2. Mid-Tribulation Rapture View: This view holds that church (believers) will be raptured at the *midpoint* of the 7-year Tribulation Period.
3. Partial Rapture View: This view holds that there will be a series of raptures during the 7-year Tribulation.
4. Pre-Tribulation Rapture View: This view holds that church (believers) will be raptured *before* the 7-year Tribulation Period. Many believe this is the most accurate view.



For more information about this see "What the Bible Says about the Future" <www.TaylorNotes.Info>.