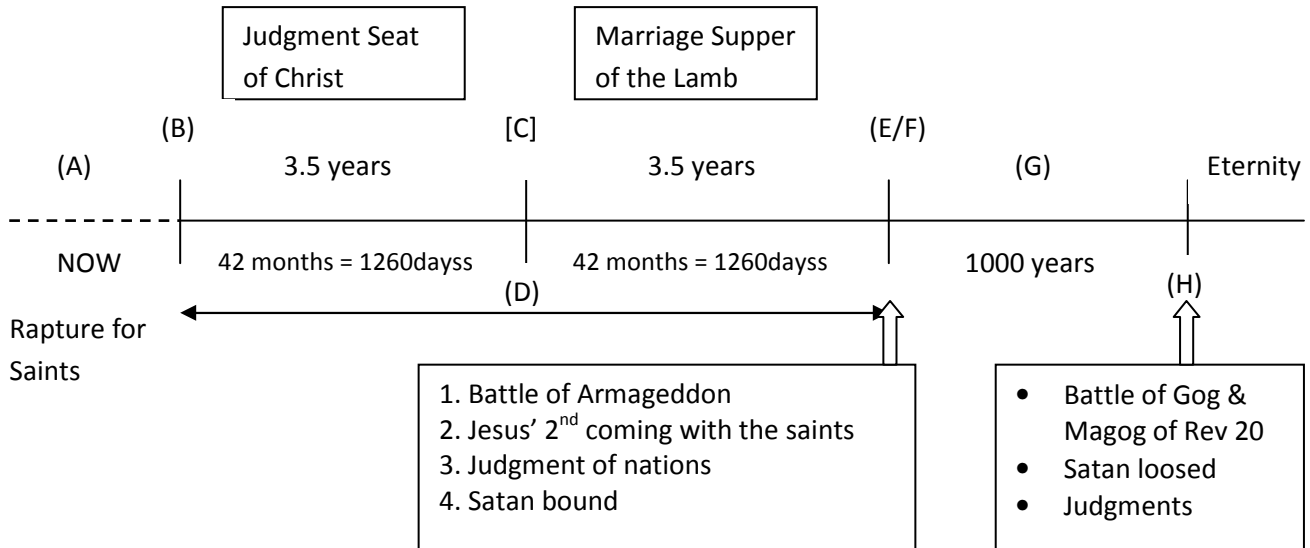


# TOPIC: END TIMES 2 – The 7 Raptures and God’s Heartbeat

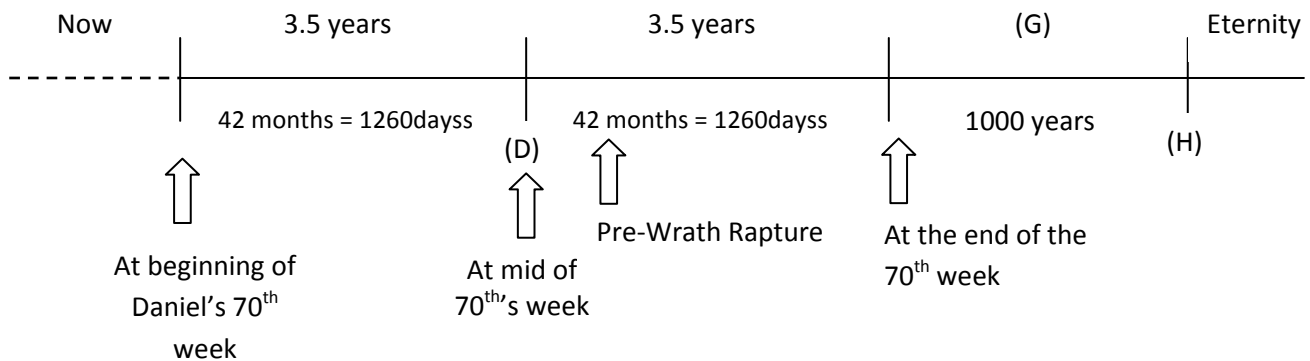
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## SUMMARY OF MESSAGE



## Different Views to Timing of Rapture



There are several views as to the timing of the rapture:

- 1) At the beginning of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week
- 2) At mid-week of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week
- 3) Pre-wrath rapture
- 4) At end of 70<sup>th</sup> week

Some pointers good to observe:

- Do not be dogmatic about the views.
- Do not part fellowship because of differing views.
- Know that despite difference of views, the reality of rapture will happen.
- Main thing is motivation and encouragement to walk worthy of the Lord.

All the views above are partly true but incomplete. They assume that only one rapture will take place when they are several. We need to look at it from the Hebraic point of view. From 1948, there has been an acceleration of revelation and illumination.

There are a total of 7 Raptures mentioned in Scriptures. The word 'rapture' does not appear in our Bible translations but it is perfectly usable. We see different phrases used in Scriptures:

- John 14:3 - received unto the Lord
- 1 Thess 4:16 - caught up to meet the Lord in the air. (In Greek, 'caught up' is the work 'harpazo'. It means 'seize', 'catch', 'pluck' – take by force.)
- 2 Thess 2:1 - gathered together

**The First Rapture: ENOCH {Genesis 5:24}**

The best guarantee of being raptured is to be walking with God. If we are walking with God, we will be raptured.

**The Second Rapture: ELIJAH {2 Kings 2:11}**

Enoch and Elijah never die.

**The Third Rapture: THE LORD JESUS CHRIST {Acts 1:9}**

This was preceded by His resurrection.

**The Fourth Rapture: THE RAPTURE OF THE SAINTS**

These are the Righteous Ones caught up before the 7-year Tribulation period. This happens at the time prior to the signing of the peace treaty by the Anti-Christ with Israel. The Righteous Ones consist of the over-comers and OT saints.

Why is this so? The Lord always rescues the righteous before His impending judgment. We see this principle throughout Scriptures, i.e. the righteous saints are always saved and rescued from God's judgment.

**a) Noah and the Flood**

In Genesis 6-8, we see the time before the flood. The people despised Noah's preaching. Noah took 75 – 100 years building the ark. The place where he labored didn't have much rain and hence people mocked at him. However, if the people had believed, they would have been saved. The water in Noah's days came from the fountains of the deep. In today's equivalent, that would be the tsunami. 'The windows of heavens were opened' (7:11) – that would be the typhoons of today. The Lord rescued Noah before the flood.

**b) Sodom and Gomorrah**

People were openly practicing homosexual sex in these cities. Despite the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah, God was prepared to spare the cities if there were 10 righteous people. Before destroying the cities, the Lord revealed to Abraham what He was going to do. In the end, there was only one righteous, i.e. Lot, who was rescued before the cities were destroyed. By the Lord's mercy, his wife and two daughters were also brought out before destruction fell.

**c) Israel at the Red Sea {Exodus 14}**

When Israel came out of Egypt, they were in hot pursuit by the Egyptians. At the Red Sea, however, what was a parting of the Sea that saved Israel became a judgment that drowned the Egyptians. The event at the crossing of the Red Sea was God's judgment on Pharaoh, the armies of Egypt and the gods of Egypt (Exodus 12:12).

**We are saved from the wrath of God.** This can be seen from the following verses:

1 Thessalonians 5:9

'For God did not appoint us to wrath but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.'

Romans 5:9

'Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.'

2 Peter 2:9

'...the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment.'

1 Thessalonians 1:10

'...and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.'

We need to differentiate between trials and tribulations. Tsunamis, earthquakes and typhoons will affect both believers and non-believers. They come as a result of the fallenness of man. The rain will fall on the just and the unjust. Both Christians and non-believers will be affected. This is to be differentiated from the specific judgment of God.

As in 1 Thess 1:10, how does Jesus deliver us from the wrath to come? It is to be done so by rapture, happening before the 7-year tribulation period. Other reasons may be cited for this position as follow:

### **Cycles and Patterns of God's dealings:**

#### **A. 7 Feasts of Israel**

1. The Passover - 1Cor 5:7
2. Unleavened Bread - John 6:35
3. First Fruits - 1Cor 15:20
4. Pentecost - Acts 2:1-4
5. Trumpets - 1 Thess 4:16-17, 1 Cor 15:20
6. Atonement - All Israel will be saved
7. Tabernacles - God dwelling with us.

How would the cycles and patterns of God's dealings serve as indications of a pre-tribulation rapture? This is so because God is the same yesterday, today and forever. He is the unchanging God. His ways are the same throughout the generations. Hence we need to know the cycles and patterns of His dealings. Besides, there are also the typology and sequence of events as enumerated below.

#### **B. Law of Harvests**

Briefly, this consists of 3 stages, i.e. the first fruits, the main harvest and the 4 corner-harvest which will be administered by the ministry of the 144,000 and angels who will be asked to go to the 4 corners of the earth to gather them.

#### **C. Stages of a Jewish Wedding.**

This may be broken down in several stages.

#1. Bridegroom leaves his father's home and goes to home of bride. This is a typology of Jesus leaving heaven.

#2. The Jewish bridegroom negotiates with the bride's father on dowry. The co-relation to this is Jesus paying with His blood to purchase the church (Bride).

#3. Upon payment of dowry, the marriage covenant is established. Couple is now declared husband and wife. Bride declared sanctified and set apart for bridegroom. Similarly, the church is sanctified and set apart for Christ.

#4. As a symbol of the covenant, bridegroom and bride drink cup of wine over which betrothal benediction is pronounced. The Holy Communion is a symbol of the covenant between Church and Bridegroom. (Christ)

#5. Bridegroom then leaves bride's home and returns to his father's home for 12 months. Similarly, Jesus ascended to heaven to Father's house with Church on earth.

#6. During period of separation, the bride prepares herself while the bridegroom prepares the living conditions in his father's house where he will subsequently bring bride to. In John 14, we are told that Jesus is preparing accommodation for us.

#7. Bridegroom's father decides the day and hour for the bridegroom to go and take his bride. The couple knows they are near the end of the 12 months but they do not know exactly when the bridegroom will go to pick the bride. Likewise, no one knows the day and hour of the rapture except the Father God.

#8. The bridegrooms' arrival will be at night, done so:

- with male entourage
- with a torchlight procession
- with shouts and blowing of trumpets which would forewarn the bride of the bridegroom's coming. Who would forewarn the bride? The bridesmaids would do that.

#9. The bridegroom will then 'capture' the bride, together with the female attendants and will go to his father's house.

#10. Upon arrival at the father's house, the wedding party will find that guests are already gathered there. Similarly, the whole of heaven awaits the rapture of the Church and the OT saints.

#11. The couple would consummate marriage in the bridal room prepared. This is likened to the spiritual union of Christ and the church.

#12. After the marriage is consummated, the bridegroom would announce the news to the wedding party who will pass on the news to the wedding guests. The feast will then begin and last the next 7 days.

#13. During the 7 days, the bride remains hidden in the bridal chamber. Similarly, for the Church, during this Marriage Supper, it is hidden in heaven for 7 years. (7 days representing 7 years) This is also the time where the 7 years of tribulation take place on earth.

#14. At end of the 7 days, the bridegroom brings the bride out, with the veil removed. Typologically, at the end of 7 years, at Christ's second coming, the Bride will be seen in full view with Christ.

As we are living in the end times, there will be increasing revelations and illuminations. The traditional arguments have come through the theological schools, done so albeit cerebrally. But we need to see in other contexts:

- Not one rapture but several.
- The differences in God's dealings with Israel, Gentiles and the Church.
- Typologies in Scripture e.g. Song of Solomon, Judges, Genesis.

Let's look at the **Rapture of the Saints:**

1 Corinthians 15:52

'in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed.'

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

**16**For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. **17**Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

This rapture is preceded by the resurrection of the dead in Christ who will join the living Body in Christ. This company of people that has been raptured is also mentioned in Revelation 4 and 5.

**Description of this company:**

In the letters to the churches, one refrain is repeatedly heard, i.e. to the overcomers. So, who are in this company?

- a. They are the over-comers who heard the midnight cry of the Lord's coming, representing the 5 wise virgins.
- b. They are the crystal sea company.

**Revelation 4:6**

Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back.

The sea refers to a mass of people. Crystal indicates flawlessness, clarity. These refer to the Bride of Christ and the OT saints.

- c. They have robes of righteousness, i.e. having right standing with God.
- d. They sing the new song. Rev 5:9
- e. They will reign with Christ on earth. Rev 5:10

This is the reward of the overcomers, of the faithful and wise servants of God. Matt 24-25

Now, as long as we, the church company, are here on earth:

- i) There is no tribulation judgment period yet. The natural disasters, e.g. tsunamis, are birthpangs, not judgment.
- ii) There is no manifestation of the Anti-Christ.
- iii) There is no mark of the beast.
- iv) The Church on earth reigns with Christ to bind and loose.
- v) The works of the evil one are restricted.

If we read the Book of Revelation and fear, we are on the wrong track. When we are still on the earth, the works of the evil ones will be restricted.

**The Fifth Rapture: THE MID-TRIBULATION RAPTURE**

This rapture is in the middle of the 7-year tribulation period, mentioned in Revelation 7:9-17. A great multitude of Gentiles and Jews will be saved due to the very successful ministry of the 144,000 Jewish evangelists.

Revelation 7:9

'After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands 13Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?'

We already know there is a company of saints and elders up there. SO who are these? The words, 'where did they come from?' suggest these were previously not in heaven. Let's read on.

Rev 7:14

"14And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. "

This **Mid-Tribulation Rapture** is different from the earlier Rapture of the Righteous Dead:

- a. It does not have the accompanying resurrection mentioned in 1 Thess 4:16-17.
- b. The Lord Jesus did not meet them in the air.

- c. They did not sing the new song but only the song of Moses and the Lamb. (The new song is only sung by the first fruits, I.e, the 144,000 Jews and the over-comers)
- d. They were snatched from the earth to escape the wrath of the devil.
- e. They have Robes of Righteousness washed in the Blood of the Lamb [Revelation 7:14, 1 John 1:9].
- f. Who are these people? They are
  1. people saved during the 1<sup>st</sup> 3½ years
  2. possibly Christians who were not raptured at the beginning of the 70<sup>th</sup> week, but who, during the 3½ years, repented and returned to the Lord, having robes washed in the Blood.

#### **The Sixth Rapture: RAPTURE OF THE 144,000 JEWS {Rev 14:1-5}**

This rapture happens some time after the middle of the 7 years. They will join the rest of the company for the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. This rapture is the catching up of the 144,000 Jewish Evangelists. They will sing the new song. They will have all the rights and privileges and all the rewards of the Church company.

Revelation 14:1-5

1Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads. 2And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. 3They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. 4These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being first fruits to God and to the Lamb. 5And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

#### **The Seventh Rapture: RAPTURE OF THE TWO WITNESSES**

This will happen on the last half day at the end of the 7-year tribulation period.

Revelation 11:3-12 (for further reading)

3And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth." 4These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth.

Scholars have debated about the identity of these two witnesses. Senior Pastor's personal view is that these are Elijah and Moses, doing signs and wonders as they did during their earth ministry. These were raptured as seen in v12:

Revelation 11:12

And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them.

#### **SUMMARY OF THE 7 RAPTURES**

1. Enoch
2. Elijah
3. The Lord Jesus Christ
4. Catching away of the Church/OT Saints
5. The Great Multitudes at Mid-Tribulation (Rev 7)
6. The 144,000 after Mid-Tribulation (Rev 14:1-5)
7. The 2 Witnesses on the day before Christ Second Coming (Rev 11:3-12)

During the 7 years tribulation, the gospel is being preached continuously. At the beginning of it, the 144,000 Messianic Jews will be sent to the world, resulting in the conversion of the Great Multitude. The ministry of the two witnesses would also add testimony to the good news as well as that done by the angels.

Revelation 14:6

‘Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue and people .’

### **The End-Time Harvest**

3 phases to this:

1. Brought about by the Church prior to being caught up in rapture.
2. Come as a result of the ministry of the 144,000 during the first 3.5 years of the Tribulation.
3. The ministry of the angels during the second half of the Tribulation.

### **CONCLUSION**

What does all this mean? We shouldn’t miss the heartbeat of God. It is not His will that any should perish but that all may come unto repentance.

### **Ezekiel 18:23**

Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?” says the Lord GOD, and not that he should turn from his ways and live?

### **Ezekiel 18:32**

For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies, says the Lord GOD.  
“Therefore turn and live!”

### **Ezekiel 33:11**

Say to them: ‘As I live,’ says the Lord GOD, ‘I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel?’

### **2 Peter 3:9**

The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

The urgency of the hour is to bring the gospel out. If we don’t arise, the Lord is going to raise other people to bring the gospel out.

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TOPIC: END TIMES 2 – The 7 Raptures and God’s Heartbeat  
QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

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1. Christ’s return is imminent. What does this mean to you?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. 1 Thess 1:10 says that God will deliver us from the wrath to come. Does it mean that we do nothing about it? What is our response to this?

