

What Happens in the End?

I. Our eschatology **slide 2**

- a. Rapture
- b. Judgement seat of Christ
- c. Tribulation
- d. Second coming of Christ
- e. Armageddon
- f. Millennial kingdom
- g. Great white throne
- h. New heaven and New Earth

II. **Rapture**, **slide 3**

- a. The word rapture does not occur in the Bible.
 - i. **Slide 4** The term comes from a Latin word meaning “a carrying off, a transport, or a snatching away.”
 - ii. The concept of the “carrying off” or the rapture of the church is clearly taught in Scripture.
- b. The rapture of the church is the event in which God “snatches away” all believers from the earth in order to make way for His righteous judgment to be poured out on the earth during the tribulation period.
- c. The rapture is described primarily in (**slide 5**)¹ Thessalonians 4:13–18 and 1 Corinthians 15:50–54.
 - i. God will resurrect all believers who have died, give them glorified bodies, and take them from the earth, along with all living believers, who will also be given glorified bodies at that time.

- ii. **Slide 6** “For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.¹⁷ **slide 7** Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.” (1 Thessalonians 4:16–17).
- d. The rapture will involve an instantaneous transformation of our bodies to fit us for eternity.
 - i. “We know that when he [Christ] appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is” (1 John 3:2).
 - ii. The rapture is to be distinguished from the second coming. At the rapture, the Lord comes “in the clouds” to meet us “in the air” (1 Thessalonians 4:17).
 - iii. At the second coming, the Lord descends all the way to the earth to stand on the Mount of Olives, resulting in a great earthquake followed by a defeat of God’s enemies (Zechariah 14:3–4).
- e. Slide 8 Three views pre, mid, post
- f. I believe in a pre-tribulation Rapture. That is to say the rapture occurs before the 7 year tribulation.
- g. There is no solitary text of Scripture that makes the entire case for the pretribulation Rapture.
- h. However, when we consider all the New Testament evidence, a very compelling case for the pretribulation

position emerges, which answers more questions and solves more problems than any other Rapture position. I want to give you the arguments that support this position.

- i. First, the earthly kingdom of Christ promised in Revelation 6–18 does not mention the church as being on earth.
 1. Because Revelation 1–3 uses the Greek word for church nineteen times, one would reasonably assume that if the church were on earth rather than in heaven in chapters 6–18, they would use “church” with similar frequency, but such is not the case.
 2. So we can assume that the church is not present on the earth during the period of tribulation described in Revelation 6–18 and that therefore the Lord has removed it from the earth and relocated it to heaven by means of the Rapture.
- ii. Second, Revelation 19 does not mention a Rapture even though that is where a post-tribulation Rapture (if true) would logically occur.
 1. So we can conclude that the Rapture will have already occurred.
- iii. Third, a post-tribulation Rapture renders the Rapture concept itself inconsequential.

1. If God preserves the church during the Tribulation, as post-tribulationists assert, then why have a Rapture at all?
 2. It makes no sense to Rapture believers from earth to heaven for no apparent purpose other than to return them immediately with Christ to earth. Further, a posttribulational Rapture makes the unique separation of the sheep (believers) from the goats (unbelievers) at the return of Christ in judgment redundant because a posttribulational Rapture would have already accomplished that.
- iv. Fourth, if God raptures and glorifies all believers just prior to the start of the millennial kingdom and all unbelievers are dead there would no one left to populate the earthly kingdom of Christ promised to Israel.
1. It is not within the Lord's plan and purpose to use glorified individuals to propagate the earth during the Millennium.
 2. Therefore, the Rapture needs to occur earlier so that after God has raptured all believers, He can save more souls—including Israel's remnant—during the seven-year Tribulation.
 3. Those people can then enter the millennial kingdom in earthly form.
 4. The most reasonable possibility for this scenario is the pretribulational Rapture.

v. Fifth, certain of Jesus' teachings demand a pre-tribulation Rapture.

1. For instance, the parable of the wheat and the tares (Matt. 13:24–30) portrays the reapers (angels) removing the tares (unbelievers) from among the wheat (believers) in order to judge the tares, which demonstrates that at the Second Coming, the Lord has unbelievers removed from among believers.
2. However, at the Rapture, He takes believers from among unbelievers.

vi. Sixth, Revelation 3:10 teaches that the Lord will remove the church prior to the Tribulation.

1. In the Greek, the phrase “I also will keep you from” can mean nothing other than “I will prevent you from entering into.”
2. Jesus Christ will honor the church by preventing it from entering the hour of testing, namely Daniel's seventieth week, which is about to come upon the entire world. Only a pretribulation Rapture can explain how this will happen.

III. Judgement seat of Christ or Bema seat judgment slide 9

- a. The Bible talks about the Judgment Seat of Christ--also referred to as the bema (the Greek word for judgment seat)--in three places: slide 10 Romans 14:10-12; 1 Corinthians 3:10--4:5; and 2 Corinthians 5:1-10.

- b. For whom is the Judgement seat of Christ?
 - i. Only church-age saints will appear at that judgment, as shown in 2 Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ."
- c. When does it occur
 - i. This event will occur immediately following the rapture or resurrection of the church after it is caught up to be with the Lord in the air as described in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.
 - ii. Arguments in support of this view:
 - 1. In Luke 14:12-14, reward is associated with the resurrection and the rapture is when the church is resurrected.
 - 2. In Revelation 19:8, when the Lord returns with His bride at the end of the tribulation, she is seen already rewarded.
 - 3. Her reward is described as fine linen, the righteous acts of the saints—undoubtedly the result of rewards.
- d. The purpose of the bema is an exhaustive evaluation of our lives.
 - i. First Corinthians 4:5 says the Lord will come and "bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God."
 - ii. That passage reveals Paul's emphasis on the judgment seat of Christ. Notice that Paul says each man's praise will come to him from God.

- iii. God gives rewards to the victors; He does not whip the losers.
- iv. We know that He won't condemn us for our sins at that point, because Romans 8:1 says, "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus."
- e. So the purpose of the judgment seat of Christ is to examine a Christian's total life.
- f. While we won't be condemned for our sins, our present lives do affect what will happen at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Don't have the mindset just get by. Here's how:
 - i. Sin and indifference in this life rob us of our present desire for serving the Lord.
 - ii. That in turn means a loss of rewards, because we will not have used our time to His glory.
 - iii. That is why Paul exhorts us to "be careful how [we] walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, making the most of [our] time, because the days are evil" (Eph. 5:15-16, NASB).
- g. Sin and indifference result in a loss of power in our lives because sin grieves the Holy Spirit.
- h. Sin and indifference cause us to pass up opportunities for service, which we would otherwise perform and be rewarded for.
- i. The greatest consequence of unfaithfulness here on earth is that it disappoints Christ. First John 2:28 says, "And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He

appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming."

- j. That is a sobering thought--we could be ashamed as we stand before the Lord. At the same time, it should encourage us with the prospect of receiving His lavish rewards if we serve Him faithfully during our time here on earth.

IV. Tribulation- Slide 11

- a. What is it
- b. The Tribulation is a future time period when the Lord will accomplish at least two aspects of His plan:
 - i. First, He will complete His discipline of the nation Israel (Daniel 9:24), and
 - ii. Second, He will judge the unbelieving, godless inhabitants of the earth (Revelation 6 - 18).
- c. The length of the Tribulation is seven years.
 - i. This is determined by an understanding of the seventy weeks of Daniel (Daniel 9:24-27).
 - ii. The Great Tribulation is the last half of the Tribulation period, three and one-half years in length.
 - iii. It is distinguished from the Tribulation period because the Beast, or Antichrist, will be revealed, and the wrath of God will greatly intensify during this time.
- d. So it is important at this point to emphasize that the Tribulation and the Great Tribulation are not synonymous terms.

- i. Within eschatology (the study of future things), the Tribulation refers to the full seven-year period while the “Great Tribulation” refers to the second half of the Tribulation
 - e. During this time evil will not be restrained as it is now
 - i. Holy spirit restraining will be gone
 - f. Considering the information Christ gave us in Matthew 24:15-30, it is easy to conclude that the beginning of the Great Tribulation has much to do with the abomination of desolation, an action of the Antichrist.
 - i. In Daniel 9:26-27, we find that this man will make a "covenant" (a peace pact) with the world for seven years (one “week”; again, see the article on the Tribulation).
 - ii. Halfway through the seven-year period—“in the middle of the week”—we are told this man will break the covenant he made, stopping sacrifice and grain offering, which specifically refers to his actions in the rebuilt temple of the future.
 - iii. Revelation 13:1-10 gives even more detail concerning the Beast's actions, and just as important, it also verifies the length of time he will be in power.
 - iv. Revelation 13:5 says he will be in power for 42 months, which is three and one-half years, the length of the Great Tribulation.
- V. **Second coming of Christ.** slide 12

- a. The second coming of Jesus Christ is the hope of believers that God is in control of all things, and is faithful to the promises and prophecies in His Word.
- b. In His first coming, Jesus Christ came to earth as a baby in a manger in Bethlehem, just as prophesied.
 - i. Jesus fulfilled many of the prophecies of the Messiah during His birth, life, ministry, death, and resurrection.
 - ii. However, there are some prophecies regarding the Messiah that Jesus has not yet fulfilled.
- c. The second coming of Christ will be the return of Christ to fulfill these remaining prophecies.
 - i. In His first coming, Jesus was the suffering Servant.
 - ii. In His second coming, Jesus will be the conquering King.
 - iii. In His first coming, Jesus arrived in the most humble of circumstances.
 - iv. In His second coming, Jesus will arrive with the armies of heaven at His side.
- d. After Jesus ascended into heaven, the angels declared to the apostles, **slide 13** and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.” (Acts 1:11).
- e. Zechariah 14:4 (Read) identifies the location of the second coming as the Mount of Olives.

- i. **Slide 14** Matthew 24:30 declares, “At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory.”
 - ii. Titus 2:13 describes the second coming as a “glorious appearing.”
- f. The second coming is spoken of in greatest detail in Revelation 19:11-16, **slide 15** -18
- g. This will occur at the battle of Armageddon
- VI. **Armageddon**. Slide 19
 - a. Rev19:17–21 **slide 20-25**
 - b. **Slide 26**
 - c. John 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.
 - d. The beast is Antichrist (11:7; 13:1–8), leader of the last and greatest empire in human history.
 - e. The kings of the earth are the ten kings who rule the ten sectors into which Antichrist’s worldwide empire is divided (17:12–14).
 - i. Their armies have assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse (v. 11) and against His army (v. 14; Zech. 14:5).
 - ii. The formidable and seemingly invincible armed might of the beast, with all its firepower, awaits the arrival of the Rider.
 - f. But before there is any battle, it is all over.

- i. In an instant, 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 (13:11–17).
- ii. These two demonically empowered political and religious leaders of the world are dealt a horrible blow; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire.
- iii. This is the first mention in Scripture of the lake of fire, the final hell, the ultimate destination of Satan, his angels, and the unredeemed (Matt. 25:41).
- iv. Isaiah described it as the place where “their worm shall not die and their fire shall not be quenched” (Isa. 66:24), a description echoed by the Lord Jesus Christ in Mark 9:48.
- v. In Matthew 13:42 Jesus added that it will be a place where “there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”
- vi. Revelation 14:11 says of those who suffer there, “The smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; they have no rest day and night.”
- vii. Apparently, these two don’t die, but are transformed miraculously into eternal form to burn in hell.
- viii. They are the first of millions of men (20:15) and angels (Matt. 25:41) to arrive in the lake of fire.

- g. Places of God judgement being carried out has always existed and Hell is its final form.
 - i. Unlike Hades, the lake of fire is not a temporary holding place (cf. Luke 16:23) but a permanent place of incarceration and punishment.
 - ii. That the beast and the false prophet are still in the lake of fire a thousand years later when Satan is cast there (20:10) is a convincing refutation of the false doctrine of annihilationism.
 - iii. As the two most evil, vile, blasphemous people who have ever lived, it is only fitting that these two be the first to arrive in that awful place.
 - h. 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.
- VII. **Millennial kingdom** –slide 27
- a. Three views slide 28
 - i. **Slide 29** Post millennial-is an interpretation of Revelation chapter 20 which sees Christ's second coming as occurring after the “millennium,” a golden age or era of Christian prosperity and dominance.
 - 1. Postmillennialism is the belief that Christ returns after a period of time, but not necessarily a literal 1000 years.
 - 2. Those who hold this view do not interpret unfulfilled prophecy using a normal, literal method.

3. They believe that Revelation 20:4-6 should not be taken literally.
 4. They believe that “1000 years” simply means “a long period of time.”
 5. Furthermore, the prefix “post-” in “postmillennialism” denotes the view that Christ will return after Christians (not Christ Himself) have established the kingdom on this earth.
 6. Those who hold to postmillennialism believe that this world will become better and better, with the entire world eventually becoming “Christianized.”
 7. After this happens, Christ will return.
 8. However, this is not the view of the world in the end times that Scripture presents.
 9. From the book of Revelation, it is easy to see that the world will be a terrible place during that future time. Also, in 2 Timothy 3:1-7, Paul describes the last days as “terrible times.”
- ii. **Slide 30** A- Millennial is the name given to the belief that there will not be a literal 1000-year reign of Christ.
1. The people who hold to this belief are called amillennialists.
 2. The prefix “a-” in amillennialism means “no” or “not.” Hence, “amillennialism” means “no millennium.”

3. In fairness to amillennialists, they do not believe that there is no millennium at all.
 4. They just do not believe in a literal millennium—a literal 1000-year reign of Christ on earth.
 5. Instead, they believe that Christ is now sitting on the throne of David and that this present church age is the kingdom over which Christ reigns.
 6. There is no doubt that Christ is now sitting on a throne, but this does not mean that it is what the Bible refers to as the throne of David.
 7. There is no doubt that Christ now rules, for He is God.
 8. Yet this does not mean He is ruling over the millennial kingdom.
- iii. Slide 31-Premillennialism is the view that Christ's second coming will occur prior to His millennial kingdom, and that the millennial kingdom is a literal 1000-year reign of Christ on earth. That's us folks
- b. So what happens during the millennial kingdom
- i. Who is there?
 1. There will be two distinct groups occupying the Earth during the millennial kingdom—those with glorified bodies, and those with earthly bodies who lived through the

tribulation and on into the millennial kingdom.

2. Those with glorified bodies consist of the Church, receiving glorified bodies at the rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:21-23, 51-53), and those who are resurrected after Christ returns to Earth (Revelation 20:4-6).
3. Those who have earthly bodies can be subdivided into two groups: believing Gentiles and believing Jews (Israel).
 - a. The righteous Gentiles, will live on into the millennial kingdom.
 - b. They will give birth to children and will populate the Earth.
 - c. However, these are not the only ones who will be producing children during the millennial kingdom.
 - d. The impression is given that when Christ returns, all Israel will trust in Him (Zechariah 12:10).
 - e. They, too, will not receive glorified bodies (as did those who were raptured prior to the tribulation and those resurrected afterward).
 - f. They also will produce children during the millennial kingdom.

4. So, believing Gentiles, Israel, and resurrected/raptured believers (all of whom have glorified bodies) will occupy the Earth.
5. It should be noted, however, that believers with glorified bodies will not be reproducing.
6. There is no marriage after this life (Matthew 22:30).
7. Children born during the millennial kingdom will have the responsibility of faith in Christ as all people of past ages have (faith in Christ since His coming; faith in God before—Genesis 15:2-6; Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 3:20).
8. Unfortunately, not all of the children that are born during the millennial kingdom will come to faith in Christ.
9. Those that do not will be led away by Satan into rebellion against God at the end of the millennial kingdom when Satan is let loose for a short time (Revelation 20:7-10).

c. Purpose

- i. Jesus will reign as king over Israel as well as all the nations of the world (Isaiah 2:4; 42:1).
- ii. The world will live in peace (Isaiah 11:6–9; 32:18), Satan will be bound (Revelation 20:1–3), and, at the beginning, everyone will worship God (Isaiah 2:2–3).

- iii. The purpose of the 1,000-year reign is to fulfill promises God made to the world that cannot be fulfilled while Satan is free and humans have political authority.
- iv. Some of these promises, called covenants, were given specifically to Israel.
- v. Others were given to Jesus, the nations of the world, and creation. All of these will be fulfilled during Jesus' 1,000-year reign.
- d. The rule of Christ on earth will be an absolute one characterized as a rule of a rod of iron with immediate judgment on any who oppose Him. (Ps 2:9; 72:9-11 ; Isa 11:4; Rev 19:15).
 - i. A prominent feature of the government will be perfect justice in contrast to the inequities which often exist in political rules today.
 - ii. The meek and the poor will have equity in that day (Isa 11:3-5) and the wicked are warned of immediate judgment (Ps 2:10-12).
- e. The political judgment of Christ will be principally directed to those who survive the tribulation and enter the millennium in their natural bodies both of Israel and of the Gentiles.
 - i. The sheep of Matthew 25:31-46 and the godly remnant of Israel left after the rebels are purged out (Ezek 20:33-38) will comprise the earthly citizens of the millennium.

- ii. There is evidence that they will rapidly multiply and before the end of the thousand years will be able to fill the earth with renewed population.
 - iii. In this political government Israel will have a prominent place, and numerous passages relate to this in the Scripture (Isa 9:6-7; 12:1-6 ; Jer 23:5; Mic 4:1-8, etc.)
 - iv. Many passages likewise refer to Christ's rule over the entire earth of which Zechariah 14:9 may be taken as representative.
 - v. Gentiles, although in a subordinate role in relation to Israel, will nevertheless be greatly blessed in the millennium and share in the prosperity of the period.
- f. The millennium will be a period which will feature personal righteousness as well as national righteousness in keeping with Solomon's prediction: "In his days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace, till the moon be no more." (Ps 72:7).
 - i. The righteous rule of Christ Himself is described in specific terms in Isaiah 11:3-5.
 - ii. The absence of war and universal peace (Ps 72:7; Isa 2:4) will provide the context in which spiritual life will flourish.
 - iii. The praise of the Lord and the joy which will attend the blessings of that period are described in Isaiah 12:3-4 and Isaiah 61:3-7.

- iv. In addition to the presence of Christ the power of the Spirit will tend to foster and promote a deep spiritual life (Isa 32:15; 44:3 ; Ezek 39:29; Joel 2:28-29).

g. The Close of the Millennium

- i. The thousand-year reign of Christ will close, according to Revelation 20:7-9, with a rebellion against Christ as God and King.
- ii. This will be prompted by the loosing of Satan who has been bound throughout the millennial kingdom and who upon his release immediately prompts many on earth to rebel against Christ.
- iii. Those who are deceived in this will have been born during the millennium and, while forced by circumstance to make an outward profession of faith in Christ, nevertheless reveal their true state of unbelief as soon as opportunity arises.
- iv. Those who rebel, led by Satan, encompass the city of Jerusalem in an attempt to take it by force and according to Revelation 20:7-9 (read) are destroyed by fire which comes from heaven.
- v. With the destruction of the army, Satan himself is cast into the lake of fire (Rev 20:10) where the beast and the false prophet were cast a thousand years before.
- vi. The millennial kingdom, the most ideal state imaginable for man apart from the eternal state itself, thus closes with another graphic demonstration of the wickedness of the human

heart even under such ideal circumstances and forever shuts the mouths of any who would question God's justice in judging the world.

VIII. **The Judgment of the Great White Throne.** Slide 32

- a. It is for all unbelievers
- b. The great white throne judgment is described in Revelation 20:11-15 and is the final judgment prior to the lost being cast into the lake of fire.
- c. We know from Revelation 20:7-15 that this judgment will take place after the millennium and after Satan, the beast, and the false prophet are thrown into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:7-10). T
- d. The books that are opened (Revelation 20:12) contain records of everyone's deeds, whether they are good or evil, because God knows everything that has ever been said, done, or even thought, and He will reward or punish each one accordingly (Psalm 28:4; 62:12; Romans 2:6; Revelation 2:23; 18:6; 22:12).
- e. Also at this time, another book is opened, called the "book of life" (Revelation 20:12).
 - i. It is this book that determines whether a person will inherit eternal life with God or receive everlasting punishment in the lake of fire.
 - ii. Although Christians are held accountable for their actions, they are forgiven in Christ and their names were written in the "book of life from the creation of the world" (Revelation 17:8).
 - iii. We also know from Scripture that it is at this judgment when the dead will be "judged

according to what they had done” (Revelation 20:12) and that “anyone’s name” that is not “found written in the book of life” will be “thrown into the lake of fire” (Revelation 20:15).

- f. One thing for sure everyone will be judged prior to the new heaven and new earth

IX. **The New Heaven and the New Earth.**

- a. Many people have a misconception of what heaven is truly like.
- b. Revelation chapters 21-22 gives us a detailed picture of the new heavens and the new earth.
- c. After the events of the end times, the current heavens and earth will be done away with and replaced by the new heavens and new earth.
- d. The eternal dwelling place of believers will be the new earth.
 - i. The new earth is the “heaven” on which we will spend eternity.
 - ii. It is the new earth where the New Jerusalem, the heavenly city, will be located.
 - iii. It is on the new earth that the pearly gates and streets of gold will be.
- e. Heaven—the new earth—is a physical place where we will dwell with glorified physical bodies (1 Corinthians 15:35-58).
 - i. The concept that heaven is “in the clouds” is unbiblical.
 - ii. The concept that we will be “spirits floating around in heaven” is also unbiblical.

- iii. The heaven that believers will experience will be a new and perfect planet on which we will dwell.
 - iv. The new earth will be free from sin, evil, sickness, suffering, and death. It will likely be similar to our current earth, or perhaps even a recreation of our current earth, but without the curse of sin.
- f. What about the new heavens? It is important to remember that in the ancient mind, “heavens” referred to the skies and outer space, as well as the realm in which God dwells.
- i. So, when Revelation 21:1 refers to the new heavens, it is likely indicating that the entire universe will be created—a new earth, new skies, a new outer space.
 - ii. It seems as if God's heaven will be recreated as well, to give everything in the universe a “fresh start,” whether physical or spiritual.