



# 1 Thessalonians

LIVING FOR CHRIST'S SOON RETURN



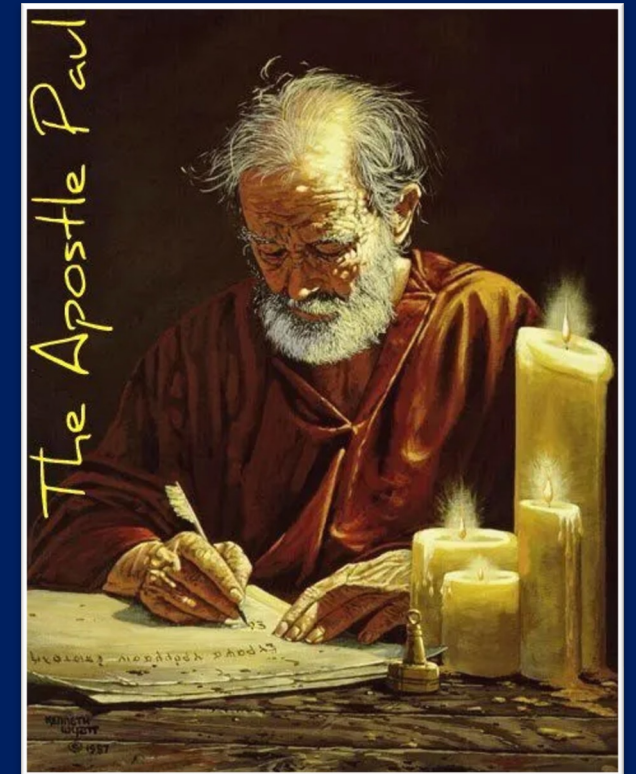
**Dr. Andy Woods**

Senior Pastor – Sugar Land Bible Church

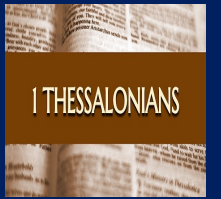
President – Chafer Theological Seminary

# Structure

<b>1 THESSALONIANS 1-3</b>	<b>1 THESSALONIANS 4-5</b>
■ <b>Personal Experience</b>	■ <b>Practical Exhortation</b>
■ <b>Looking Back</b>	■ <b>Looking Forward</b>



# Structure



## ■ Personal (1–3)

- ◆ Genuine conversion (1)
- ◆ Impure motives (2:1-16)
- ◆ Lack of concern (2:17–3:13)

## ■ Practical (4–5)

- ◆ Immorality (4:1-8)
- ◆ Laziness (4:9-12)
- ◆ Eschatology (4:13–5:11)
- ◆ Ministry imbalances (5:12-15)
- ◆ Progressive sanctification (5:16-28)

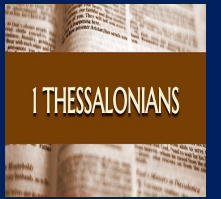
# Christian Living (4:1-12)



- General conduct (4:1-2)
- Negative command: sexual sin (4:3-8)
- Positive command: brotherly love (4:9-12)



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## 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

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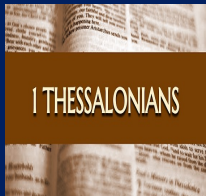


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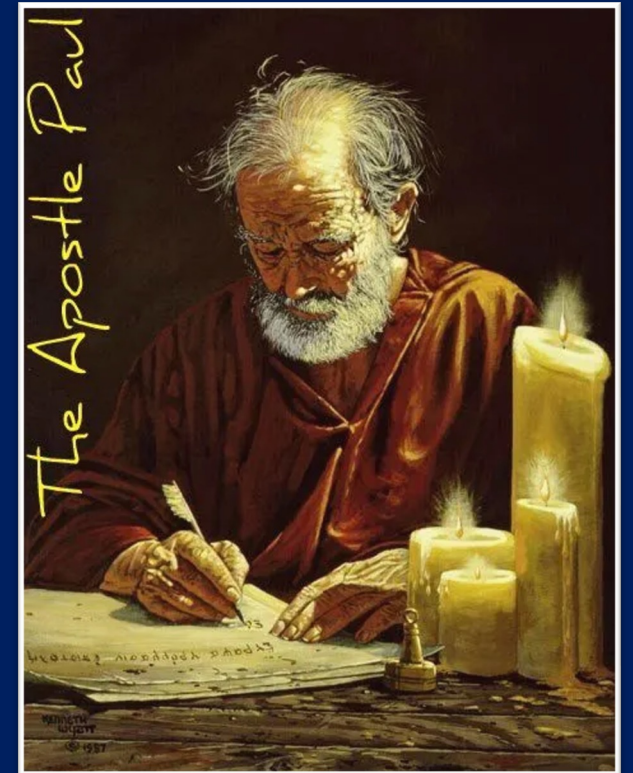
...heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.  
<sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. <sup>18</sup> Therefore comfort one another with these words."



# Unique Characteristics



- Every chapter ends with a reference to the Second Advent
- Small amount of time in between planting of the church and the first letter to the church





## 2 Thessalonians 2:5

“Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things?”





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# Order of Paul's Letters

1. Galatians (A.D. 49)
2. 1–2 Thessalonians (A.D. 51)
3. 1–2 Corinthians (A.D. 56)
4. Romans (A.D. 57)
5. Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, Philippians (A.D. 60–62)
6. 1 Timothy, Titus (A.D. 62–66)
7. 2 Timothy (A.D. 67)



# Five General Comments (1 Thess. 4:13-18)

1. Not the first mention of The Rapture
2. “Rapture” comes from the Latin
3. The Rapture is distinct from the Second Advent
4. Only for the Church Age believer
5. Pre-tribulationism is the correct view



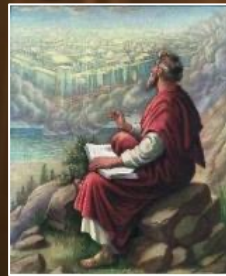
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## John 14:1–4

<sup>1</sup> “Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> 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. <sup>4</sup> And you know the way where I am going.”





# Parallels

## JOHN 14:1-4

## 1 THESS 4:13-18

**trouble (1)**

**sorrow (13)**

**Believe (1)**

**believe (14)**

**God, me (1)**

**Jesus, God (14)**

**told you (2)**

**say to you (15)**

**come again (3)**

**coming of the Lord (15)**

**receive, you (3)**

**caught up (17)**

**to myself (3)**

**to meet the Lord (17)**

**be where I am (3)**

**ever be with the Lord (17)**

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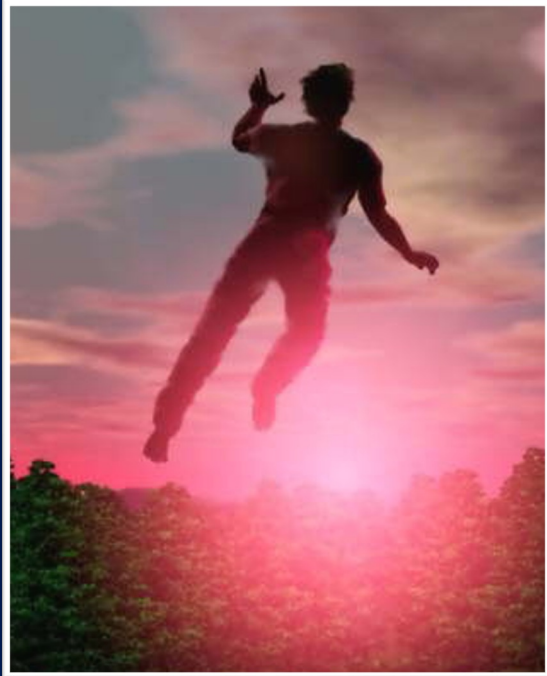
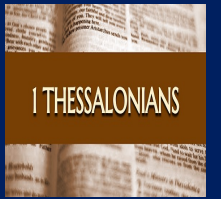
<sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up (*harpazō*) together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.

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# Catching Away of All Living Believers

(1 Thess. 4:17)

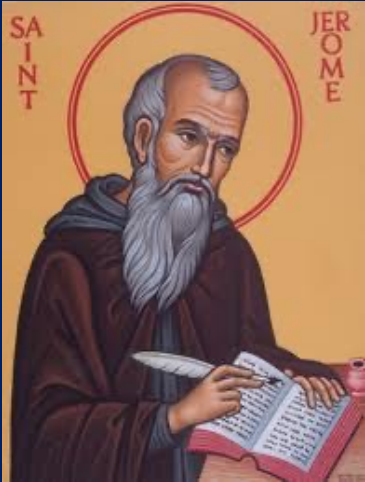


- *Harpazo* = seized or caught up by force
- *Harpazo* (Greek) = *rapere* (Latin) = rapture (English)



# Latin Vulgate Translation

(1 Thess. 4:17)



“Deinde nos, qui vivimus, qui relinquimur, simul rapiemur cum illis in nubibus obviam Christo in aëra, et sic semper cum Domino erimus.”

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# RAPTURE DISTINCT FROM SECOND ADVENT

## RAPTURE

(1 Thess 4:13-17; 1 Cor 15:51-57)

## SECOND COMING

(Rev 19:11-16)

Christ comes in the air (1 Thess 4:16)

Christ comes to the earth (Zech 14:4)

For His saints (1 Thess 4:15-17)

With His saints (Rev 19:14)

Blessing (1 Thess 4:18)

Judgment (Rev 19:15)

Effects only believers (1 Thess 4:16)

Effects both believers and unbelievers  
(Rev 19:15)

Invisible (1 Thess 4:16)

Visible to all (Rev 1:7)

Announced only by an archangel (1 Thess 4:16)

Involves myriads of angels (Jude 14)

Resurrection (1 Cor 15: 51)

No resurrection

Rescue of the church (1 Thess 1:10)

Rescue of Israel (Matt 23:37-39)

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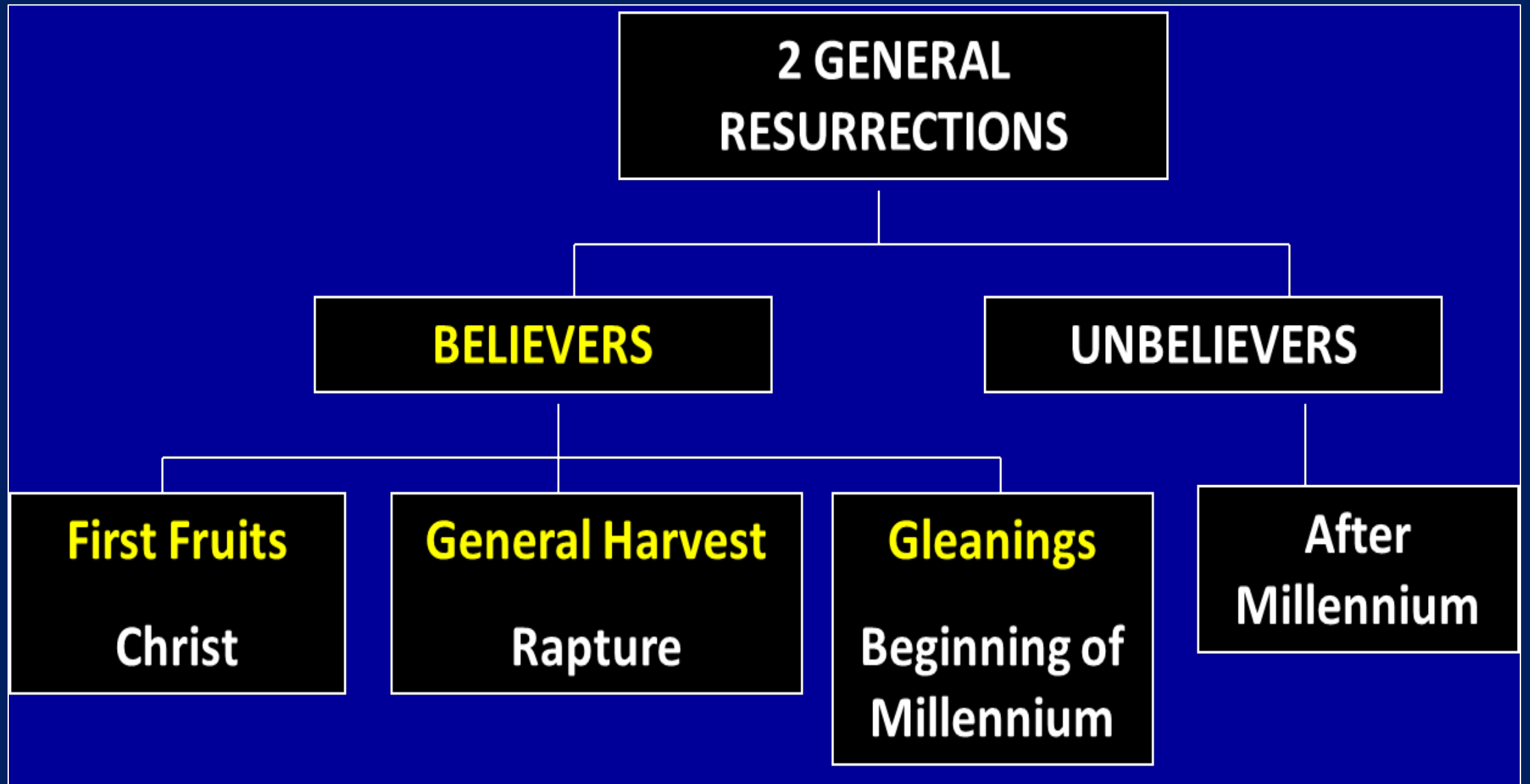
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# God's Resurrection Program

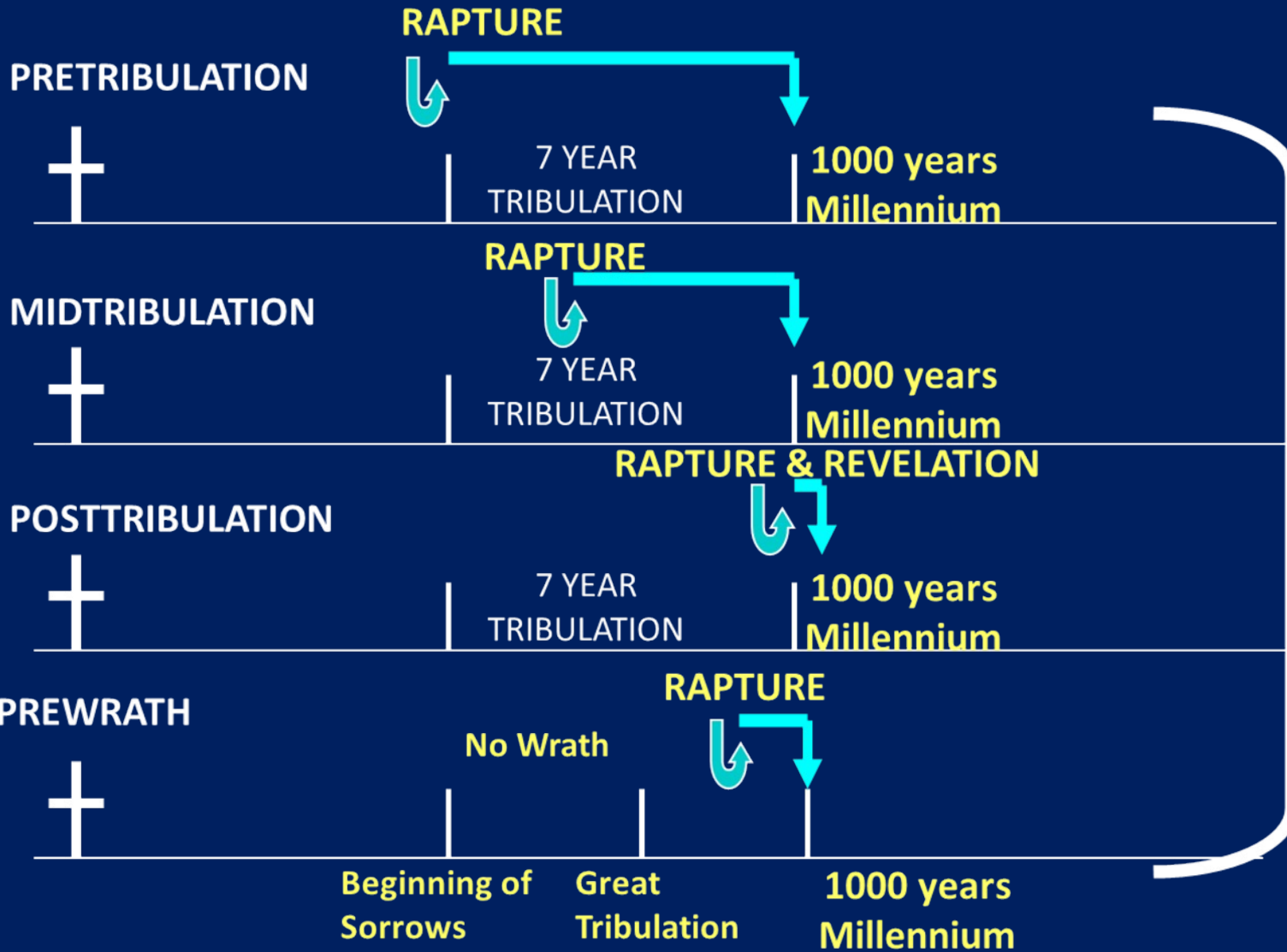


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# RAPTURE VIEW COMPARISION



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# When is the Rapture?

## 7 Arguments Favoring the Pre-Tribulation View

1. Tribulation's purpose concerns Israel (Jer 30:7; Dan 9:24)
2. No biblical reference to the church on earth during the Tribulation period (Rev 4-22)
3. Church is promised an exemption from divine wrath (1 Thess 1:10; 5:9; Rom 5:9; Rev 3:10; 6:17)
4. Rapture is imminent (1 Cor 15:51; 1 Thess 4:15)
5. Rapture is a comfort (1 Thess 4:18)
6. Antichrist cannot come to power until the restrainer is removed (2 Thess 2:6-7)
7. Symbolic parallels (2 Peter 2:5-9)

## 5. Pre-Tribulationism is the Correct View

- A. Imminency (15)
- B. Comfort (18)
- C. Exemption from Divine Wrath  
(1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9)





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# 1 Corinthians 15:51

“Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep,  
but we will all be changed.”

An open book is shown from a top-down perspective, lying flat on a dark surface. The pages are white with some faint text. In the center of the book, there is a glowing, circular hole that looks like it was torn through the paper. The hole is surrounded by a bright, golden light that radiates outwards. Inside the hole, the word "Mystery" is written in a white, serif font against a black background.

Mystery

# Imminent

(1 Cor 15:51; 1 Thess 4:15)



- Imminency definition
- James 5:8; 1 Thess 1:10; 1 Cor 1:7; Philip 3:20
- We are to be looking for Jesus Christ and not the Antichrist!
- Motivator (Holiness, Evangelism)
- Feast of Trumpets?

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## Wayne Brindle

"Biblical Evidence for the Imminence of the Rapture,"  
*Bibliotheca Sacra* 158, no. 630 (April-June 2001): 138-51.

“Four criteria may be suggested, any one of which indicates imminence:

- (1) The passage speaks of Christ’s return as at any moment.
- (2) The passage speaks of Christ’s return as ‘near,’ without stating any signs that must precede His coming.
- (3) The passage speaks of Christ’s return as something that gives believers hope and encouragement, without indicating that these believers will suffer tribulation.
- (4) The passage speaks of Christ’s return as giving hope without relating it to God’s judgment of unbelievers.”

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# 1 Thessalonians 1:10

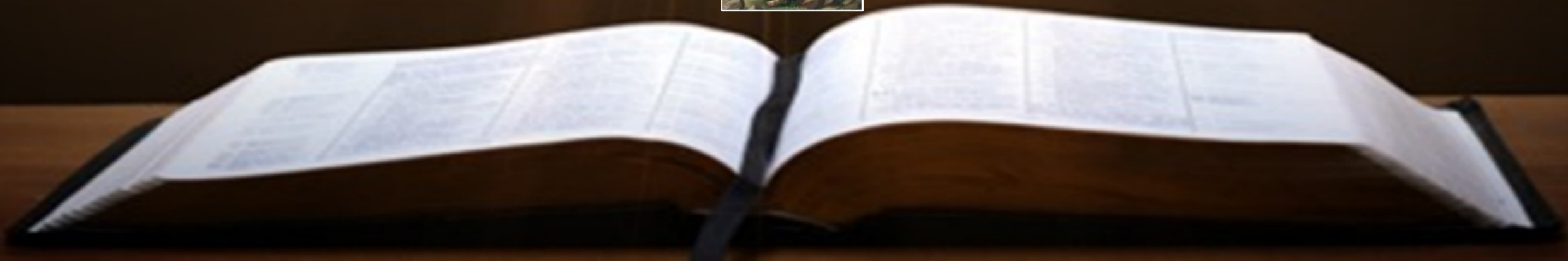
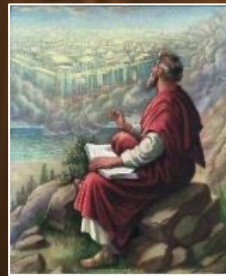
“and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues (*rhyomai*) us from (*ek*) the wrath (*orgē*) to come..”

WRATH



## John 14:1–4

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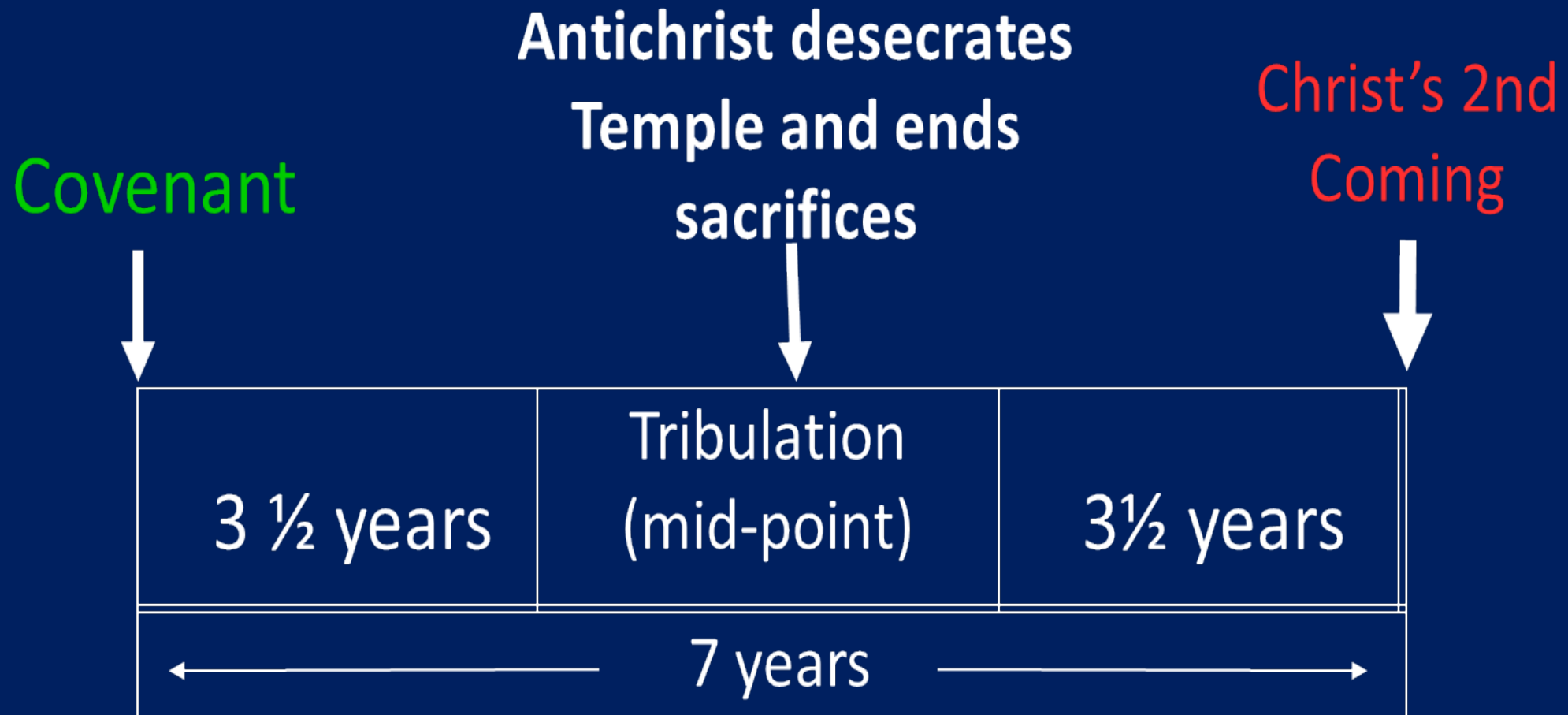
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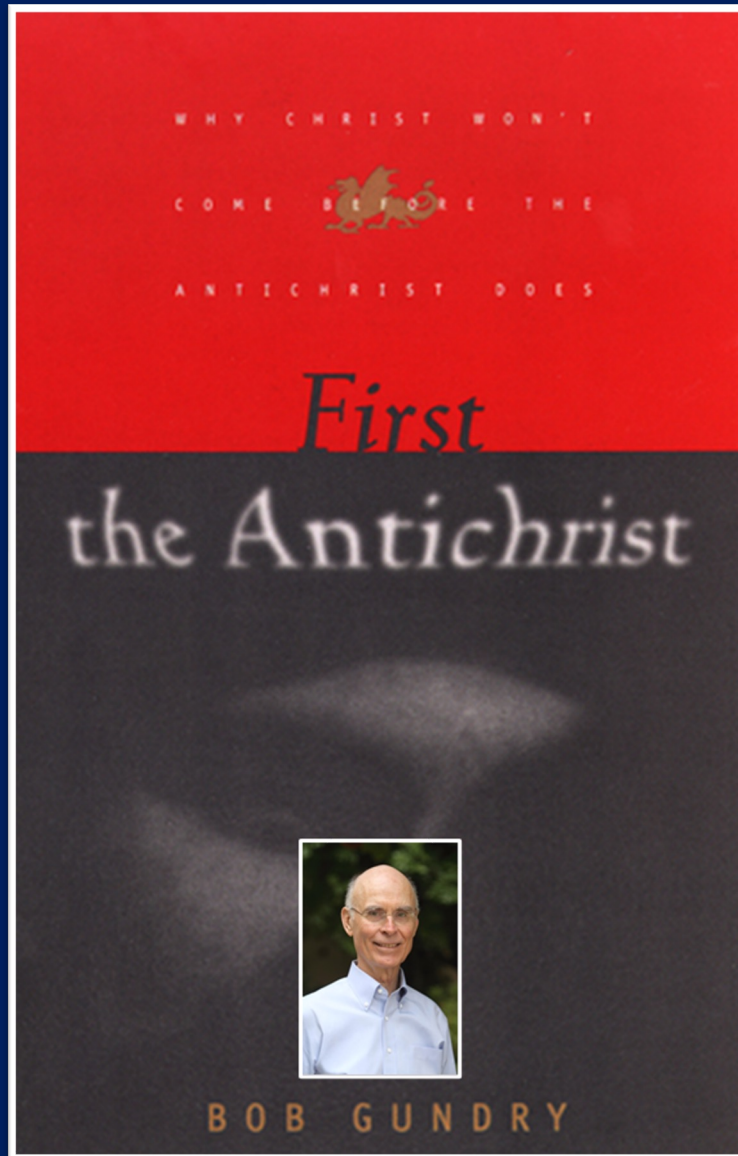


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# DAN 9:27 OVERVIEW OF TRIBULATION PERIOD

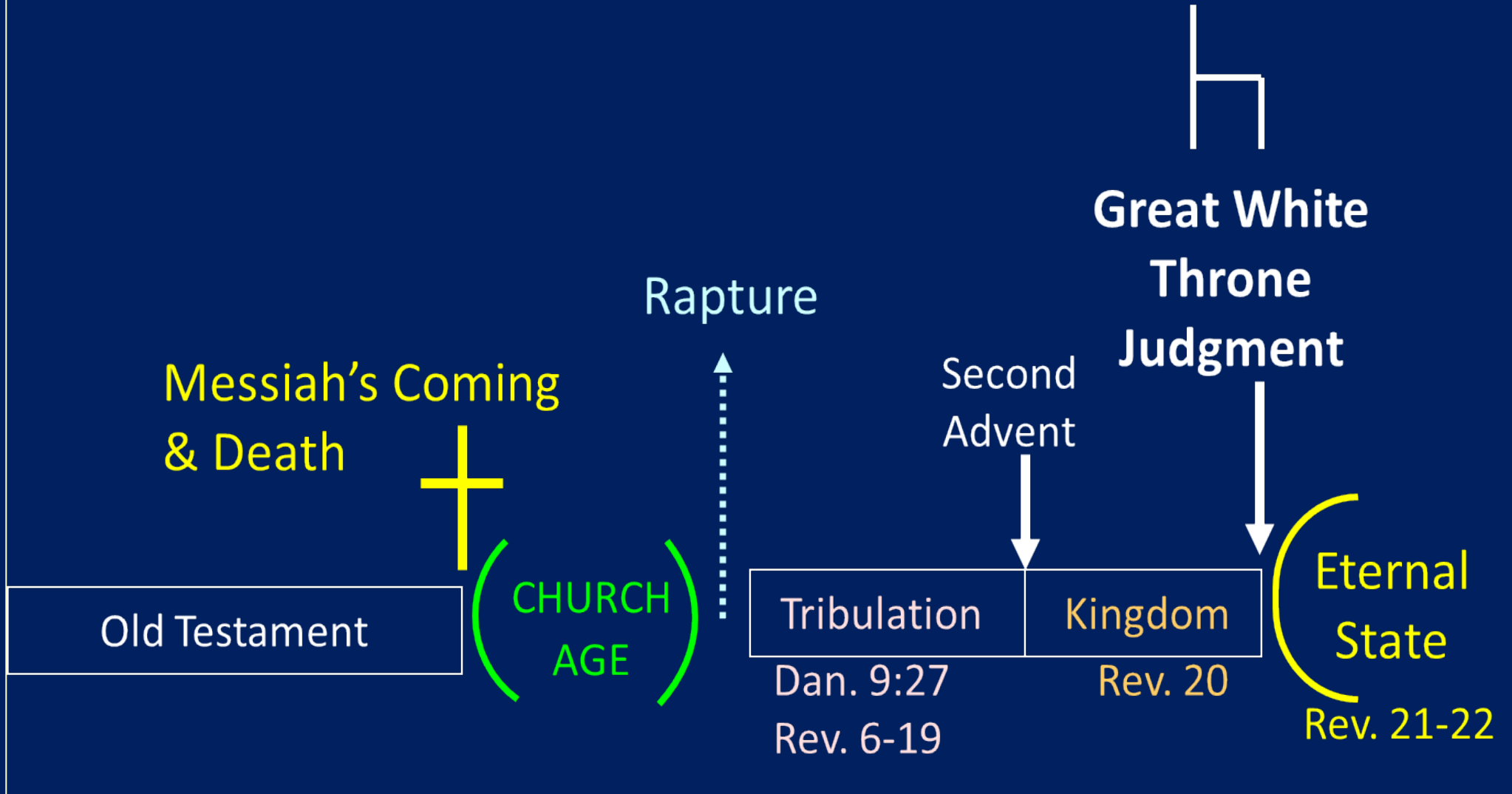




Robert H. Gundry, *The Church and the Tribulation: Why Christ Won't Come Before the Antichrist Does* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973).



# Prophecy Panorama



# Imminent

(1 Cor 15:51; 1 Thess 4:15)



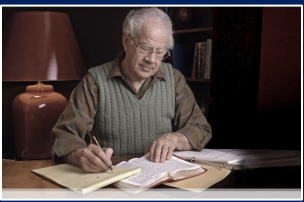
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## 2 Peter 3:10-11

“<sup>10</sup> But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. <sup>11</sup> Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness.”

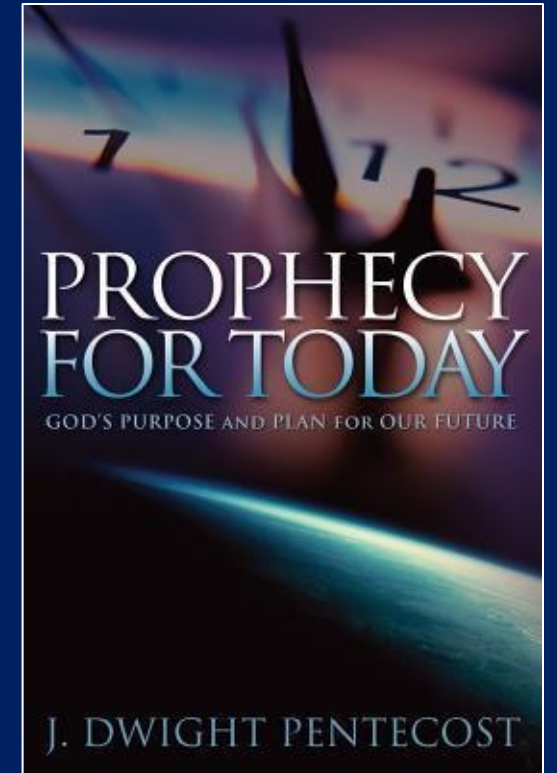




# J. Dwight Pentecost

Prophecy For Today, Page 20

“A short time ago, I took occasion to go through the New Testament to mark each reference to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and to observe the use made of that teaching about His coming. I was struck anew with the fact that almost without exception, when the coming of Christ is mentioned in the New Testament, it is followed by an exhortation to godliness and holy living.”



# Imminent

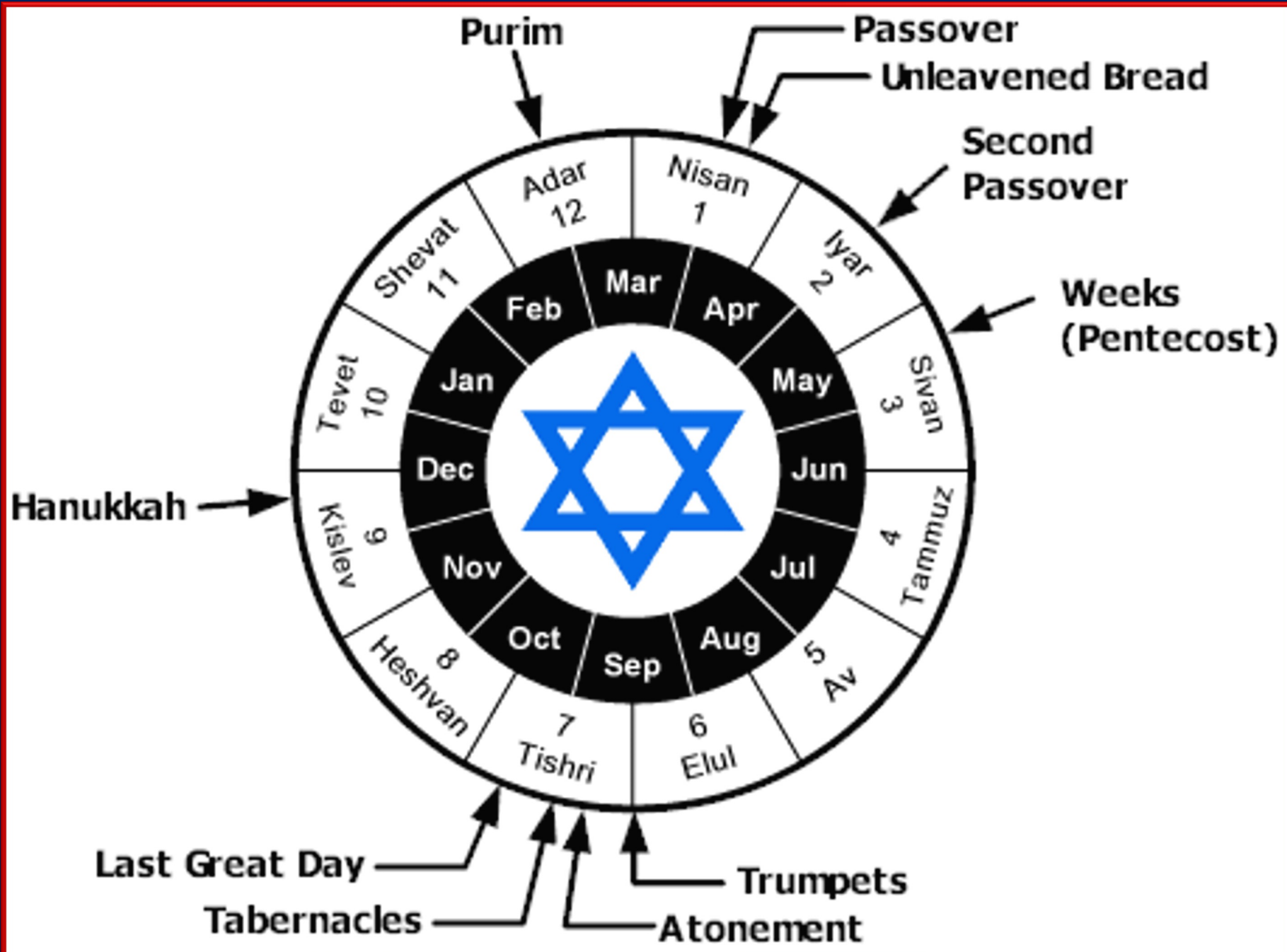
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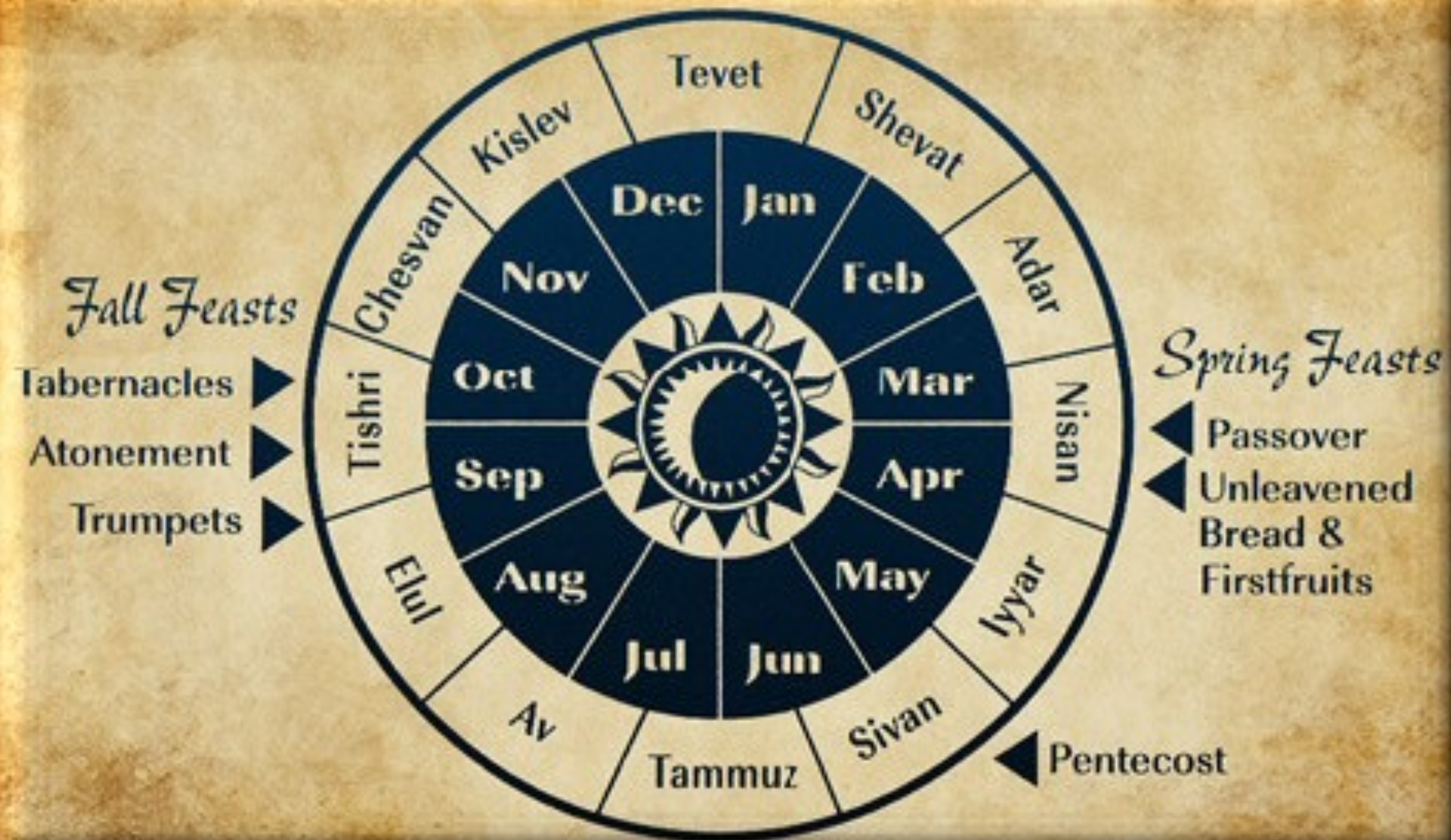
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# Levitical Feasts (Lev. 23)

<b>Feast</b>	<b>Season</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Type</b>
<b>Passover</b>	Spring	Redemption	1 Cor. 5:7
<b>Unleavened Bread</b>	Spring	Separation	John 6:35
<b>1st fruits</b>	Spring	Praise	1 Cor. 15:20
<b>Pentecost</b>	Spring	Praise	Acts 2:1-4
<b>Trumpets</b>	Fall	New Year	Matt. 24:31
<b>Atonement</b>	Fall	Lev 16	Zech. 12:10
<b>Booths</b>	Fall	Wilderness provision	Zech. 14:16-18











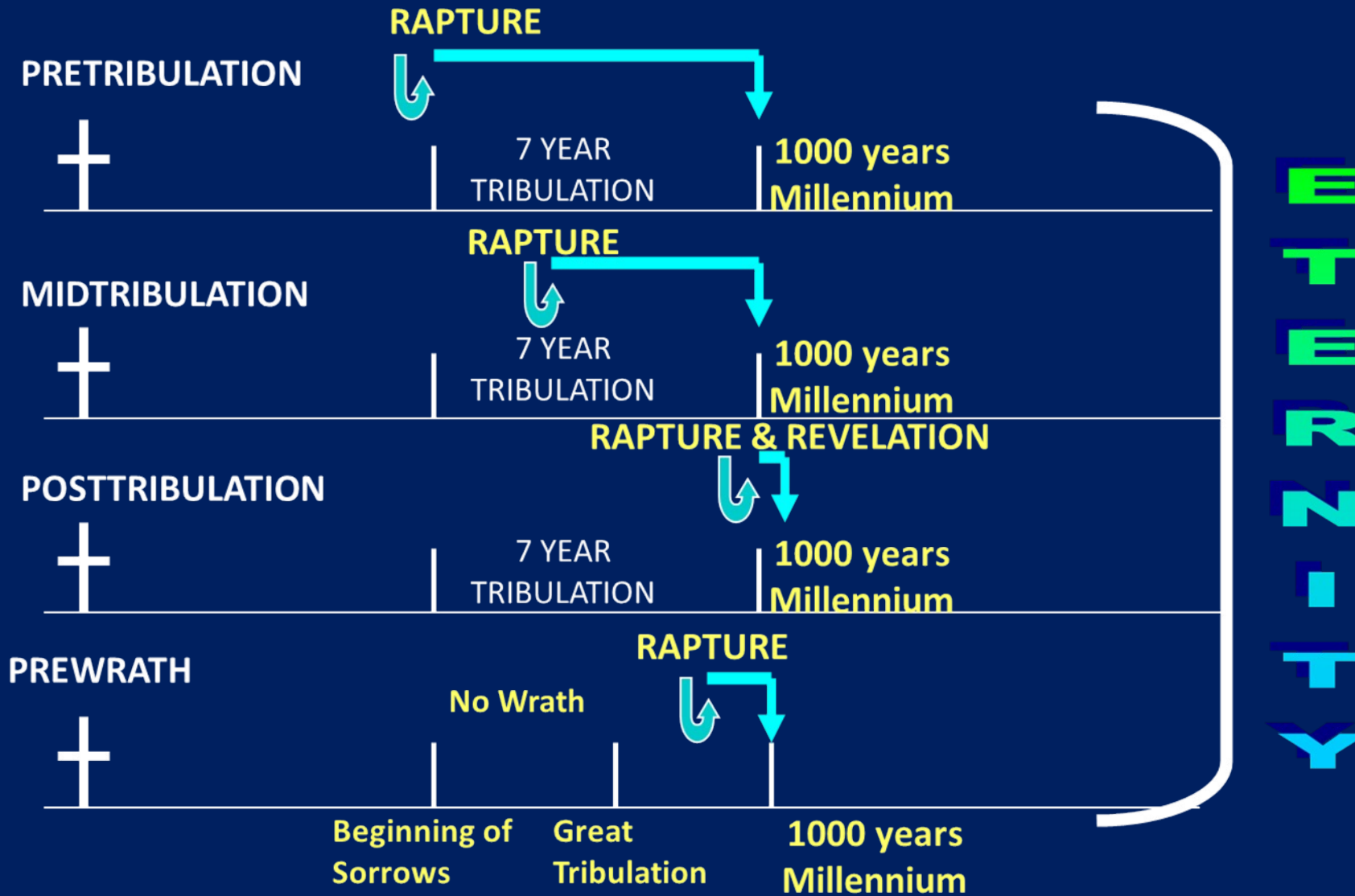
## Psalm 147:19-20

“He declares His words to Jacob, His statutes and His ordinances to Israel. He has not dealt thus with any nation; And as for His ordinances, they have not known them. Praise the LORD!”





# RAPTURE VIEW COMPARISION



## 5. Pre-Tribulationism is the Correct View

A. Imminency (15)

B. Comfort (18)

C. Exemption from Divine Wrath  
(1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9)



## 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

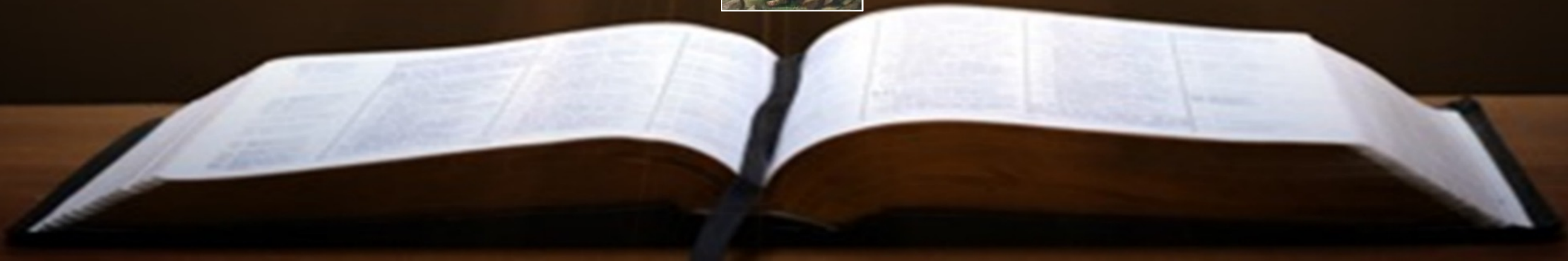
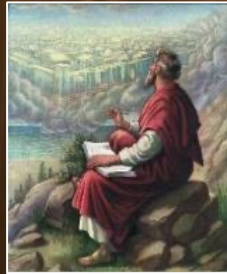
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## John 14:1–4

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## Titus 2:13

“Looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus.”

Hope  
Hope



Hope  
Hope

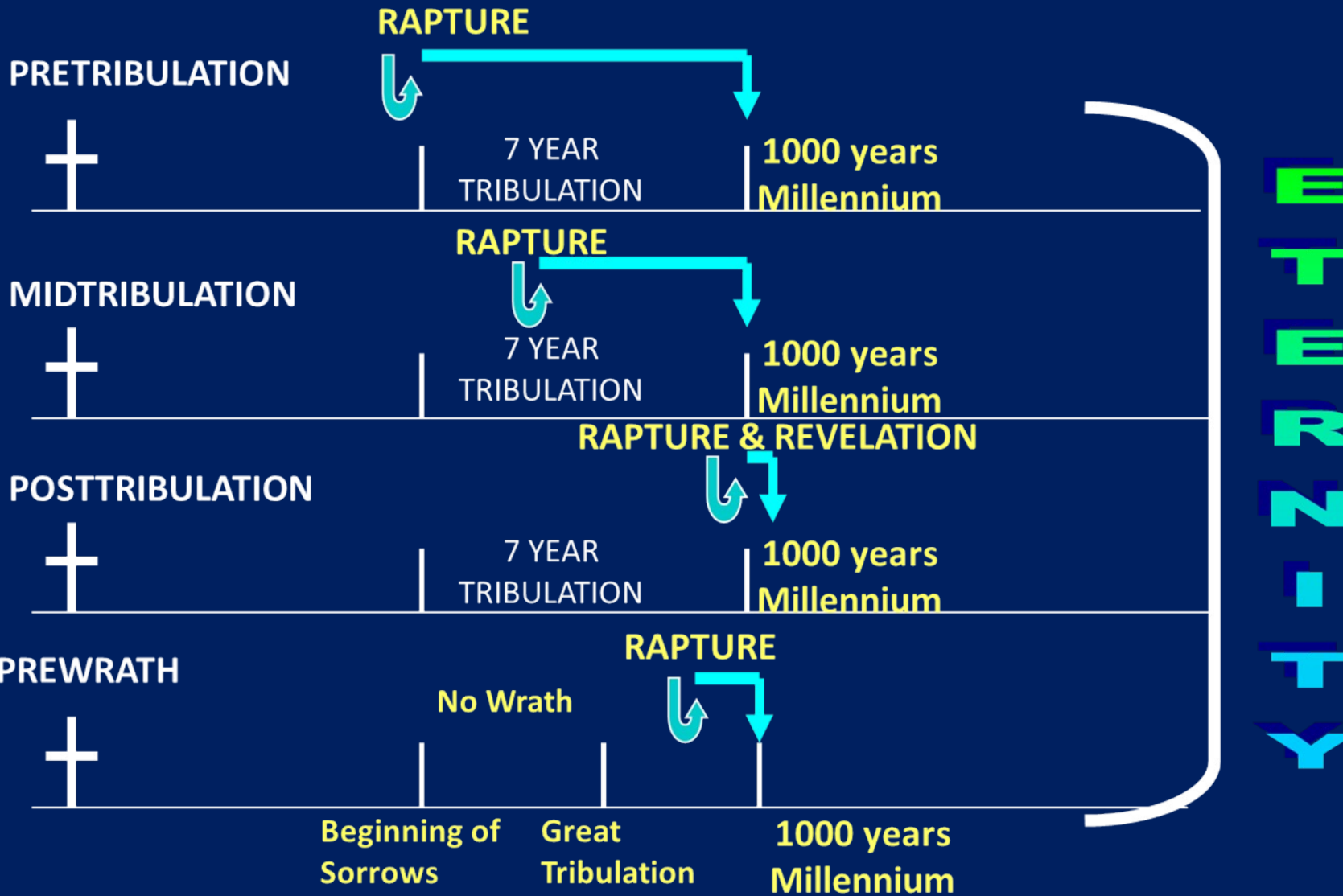


# Comfort



- John 14:1; 1 Thess 4:18; Titus 2:13
- Other rapture views are not comforting since they place the church into divine wrath

# RAPTURE VIEW COMPARISION



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# Donald Grey Barnhouse

Cited in Mark Hitchcock, "An Overview of Pretribulational arguments,"  
online: [www.pre-trib.org](http://www.pre-trib.org), accessed 27 August 2013, 29-30.

"Jesus may come today, Glad day! Glad day!

And I would see my friend;

Dangers and troubles would end If Jesus should come today.

Glad day! Glad day! Is it the crowning day?

I'll live for today, nor anxious be, Jesus, my Lord, I soon shall see;

Glad day! Glad day! Is it the crowning day?"





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Cited in Mark Hitchcock, "An Overview of Pretribulational arguments,"  
online: [www.pre-trib.org](http://www.pre-trib.org), accessed 27 August 2013, 29-30.

By way of parody, Dr. Barnhouse also pointed out that if the midtrib or posttrib advocates sang this song, it would instead have to say:

“Jesus can’t come today, Sad day! Sad day! And I won't see my friend; Dangers and troubles won't end Because Jesus can't come today. Sad day! Sad day! Today is not the crowning day? I won't live for today, and anxious I'll be, The Beast and the False Prophet I soon shall see, Sad day! Sad day! Today is not the crowning day?”

## 5. Pre-Tribulationism is the Correct View

- A. Imminency (15)
- B. Comfort (18)
- C. Exemption from Divine Wrath  
(1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9)



# Promised Exemption from Divine Wrath

- The promise (1 Thess 1:10; 5:9; Rom 5:9; 8:1; Rev 3:10)
- Tribulation = divine wrath/anger (Rev 6:16-17; 11:18; 14:10; 15:1, 7; 16:1, 19; 19:15)



WRATH

## 1 Thessalonians 1:10

“and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues (*rhyomai*) us from (*ek*) the wrath (*orgē*) to come..”

~~WRATH~~





# The 7 Churches in Revelation

Rev. 1:11





## Revelation 6:16-17

“<sup>16</sup> and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath [orgé] of the Lamb; <sup>17</sup> for the great day of their wrath [orgé] has come, and who is able to stand?”





## Rev. 6:16-17

Robert L. Thomas, Revelation 1–7: An Exegetical Commentary, ed.  
Kenneth Barker (Chicago: Moody, 1992), 457-58.

"Mankind in his rebellion correctly analyzes the cosmic and terrestrial disturbances as a part of the great end-time day of wrath from the one sitting on the throne and from the Lamb. The verb *ēlethen* ("has come") is aorist indicative, referring to a previous arrival of wrath, not something that is about to take place. Men see the arrival of this day at least as early as the cosmic upheavals that characterize the sixth seal (6:12-14), but upon reflection they probably recognize that it was already in effect with the death of one-fourth of the population (6:7-8), the worldwide famine (6:5-6), and the global warfare (6:3-4). The rapid sequence of all of these events could not escape notice, but the light of their true explanation does not dawn upon human consciousness until the severe phenomena of the sixth seal arrive."

# 1<sup>st</sup> Six Seals (Revelation 6)

**SEAL 1** – 6:1-2 – Advent of antichrist

**SEAL 2** – 6:3-4 – War

**SEAL 3** – 6:5-6 – Famine

**SEAL 4** – 6:7-8 – Death

**SEAL 5** – 6:9-11 – Martyrdoms

**SEAL 6** – 6:12-17 – Cosmic disturbances



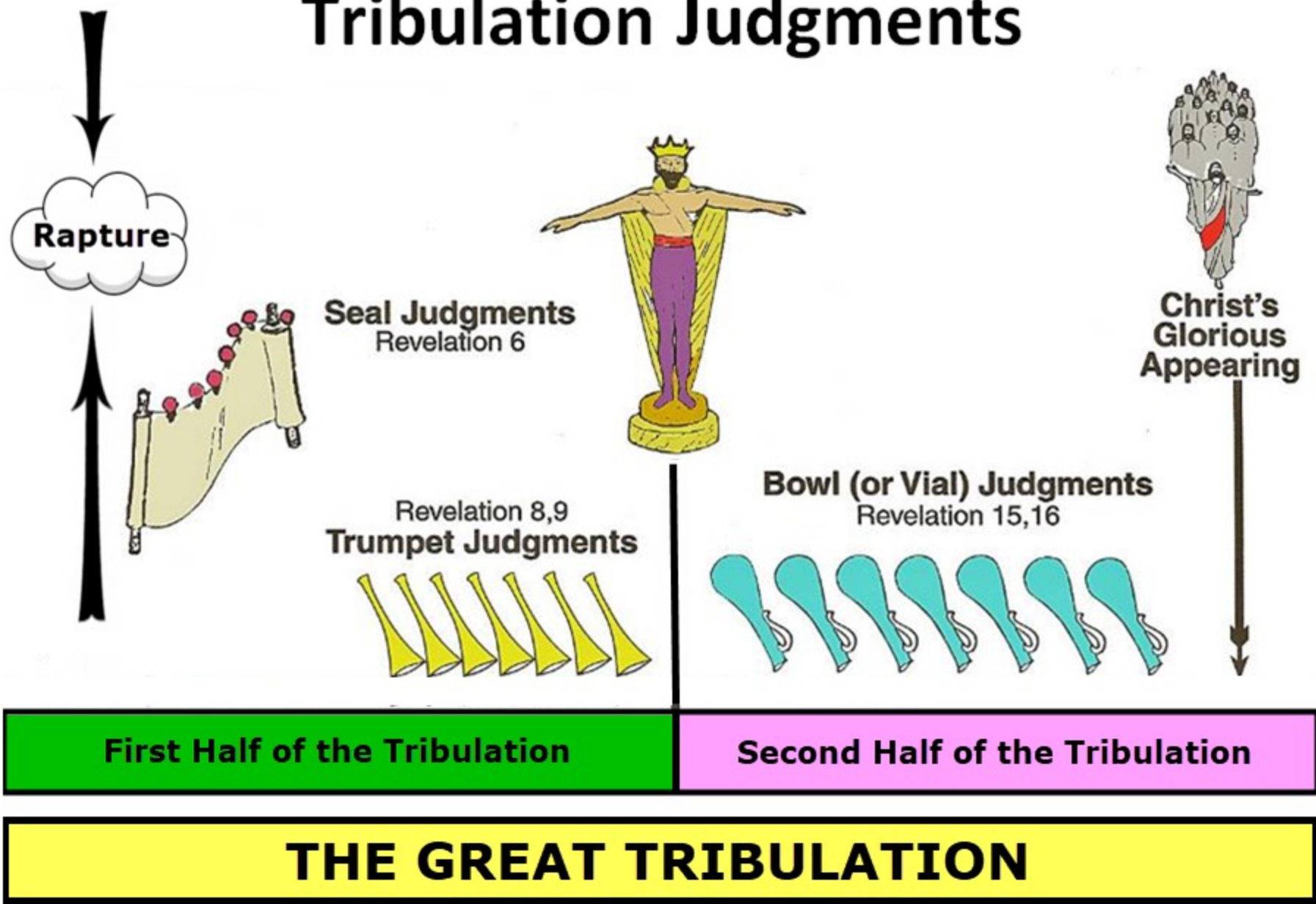
## Romans 2:8-9

“<sup>8</sup> but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath [*orgé*] and indignation [*thumós*]. <sup>9</sup> *There will be* tribulation [*thlípsis*] and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek.”





# Tribulation Judgments





# Pretribulationism is not Escapism

- Trials (John 16:33)
- Man's wrath (2 Tim 3:12)
- Satan's wrath (Eph 6:11-12)
- World's wrath (John 15:18-19)

Escapism

es-cap-ism /ɪ'skeɪ.pɪ.zəm/

(n) The practice of avoiding an unpleasant reality or a difficult or boring situation by distracting the mind towards daydreaming or other activities of entertainment

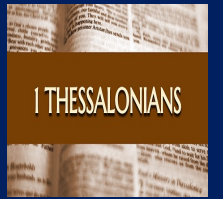
Conclusion

# Five General Comments (1 Thess. 4:13-18)

1. Not the first mention of The Rapture
2. “Rapture” comes from the Latin
3. The Rapture is distinct from the Second Advent
4. Only for the Church Age believer
5. Pre-tribulationism is the correct view



# Structure



## ■ Personal (1–3)

- ◆ Genuine conversion (1)
- ◆ Impure motives (2:1-16)
- ◆ Lack of concern (2:17–3:13)

## ■ Practical (4–5)

- ◆ Immorality (4:1-8)
- ◆ Laziness (4:9-12)
- ◆ Eschatology (4:13–5:11)
- ◆ Ministry imbalances (5:12-15)
- ◆ Progressive sanctification (5:16-28)