

# God's Promise of the Rapture

## Overview Revelation 19-20

" The fact that John Nelson Darby invented the pre-tribulation rapture doctrine around 1830 AD is unquestionably true. All attempts to find evidence of this wild doctrine before 1830 have failed"  
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The **Didache**, chapter 16 (50-70 AD)

Watch for your life's sake. Let not your lamps be quenched, nor your loins unloosed; but be ready, for you know not the hour in which our Lord comes.... (Describing the antichrist) he shall do iniquitous things which have never yet come to pass since the beginning. Then shall the creation of men come into the fire of trial, and many shall be made to stumble and shall perish; but they that endure in their faith shall be saved from under the curse itself...

**Shepherd of Hermas** (140-150,

You have escaped from great tribulation on account of your faith, and because you did not doubt in the presence of such a beast. Go, therefore, and tell the elect of the Lord His mighty deeds, and say to them that this beast is a type of the great tribulation that is coming. If then ye prepare yourselves, and repent with all your heart, and turn to the Lord, it will be possible for you to escape it, if your heart be pure and spotless, and ye spend the rest of the days of your life in serving the Lord blamelessly.

**Irenaeus** Against Heresies 5.5.1 (174-189 AD)

For Enoch, when he pleased God, was translated in the same body in which he did please Him, thus pointing out by anticipation the translation of the just.

5.29.1

And therefore, when in the end the Church shall be suddenly caught up from this, it is said, There shall be tribulation such as has not been since the beginning, neither shall be. Matthew 24:21

5.29.2-5.30.3 discusses the Antichrist

5.30.4

But when this Antichrist shall have devastated all things in this world, he will reign for three years and six months, and sit in the temple at Jerusalem; and then the Lord will come from heaven in the clouds, in the glory of the Father, sending this man and those who follow him into the lake of fire; but bringing in for the righteous the times of the kingdom, that is, the rest, the hallowed seventh day; and restoring to Abraham the promised inheritance,

5.31 discusses the various "resurrections of the dead"

5.31.2

so ought we also to await the time of our resurrection prescribed by God and foretold by the prophets, and so, rising, be taken up, as many as the Lord shall account worthy of this [privilege].

5.32.1

Inasmuch, therefore, as the opinions of certain [orthodox persons] are derived from heretical discourses, they are both ignorant of God's dispensations, and of the mystery of the resurrection of the just...

**Victorinus**, Commentary on Revelation (250-303 AD)

6:14. And the heaven withdrew as a scroll that is rolled up. For the heaven to be rolled away, that is, that the Church shall be taken away

15:1. And I saw another great and wonderful sign, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is completed the indignation of God. For the wrath of God always strikes the obstinate people with seven plagues, that is, perfectly, as it is said in Leviticus; and these shall be in the last time, when the Church shall have gone out of the midst

**Ephraem the Syrian** (306 – 373) entitled Sermon on The Last Times, The Antichrist, and The End of the World (4th-6th century)

Why therefore do we not reject every care of earthly actions and prepare ourselves for the meeting of the Lord Christ, so that he may draw us from the confusion, which overwhelms all the world? . . . For all the saints and elect of God are gathered, prior to the tribulation that is to come, and are taken to the Lord lest they see the confusion that is to overwhelm the world because of our sins.

(The later second coming of Christ to the earth with the saints is mentioned at the end of the sermon.)

**Harpazo**

**Matthew 11:12** — “And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.

**Matthew 13:19** — “When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.

**John 6:15** — Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone.

**John 10:29** — “My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand.

**Acts 8:39** — Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.

**Comfort**

**John 14:1-3** — “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. “In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you.

I go to prepare a place for you. “And 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.

**Edifies**

**1 John 3:1-3**

**1 Corinthians 15:51-53**— Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— 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. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

**Philippians 3:21**— who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

Apostasia (noun)

**Acts 21:21** — “but they have been informed about you that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to the customs.

**Aphistemi (verb)**

Translated "depart" 11 of 15 times.

apo + histemi To separate + to stand, to place, put, set

### **The Rapture Vs. The Second Coming**

1. At the rapture, Christ comes in the air and returns to heaven (1 Thess 4:17, John 14:3), but at the second coming, Christ comes to the earth to dwell and reign, and is seen by all (Matt 25:31-32, Rev 1:7).

2. At the rapture, Christ gathers His own (1 Thess 4:16-17), but at the second coming, the angels do the gathering (Matt 24:31).

**Matthew 24:31** — “And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

3. The rapture is associated with comfort and reward (1 Thess 4:17, 2 Cor 5:8-10, John 14:1), but at the second coming, Christ comes to judge (Matt 25:31-46).

Why will there need to be sheep & goat separation if all believers were just rapture?

**Matthew 25:31-33**— “When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.

“All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. “And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.

4. At the rapture, resurrection is before (1 Thess 4:15-16), but at the second coming, resurrection is after. (Rev. 20:4-6)

If all believers get rapture before the Second Coming, then who populates the Millennium?

5. At the rapture, believers depart the earth (1 Thess 4:15-17), but at the second coming, believers return with Christ (Rev 19:20, Jude 14-15, Zech 14:5, 1 Thes 3:13 ).

**1 Thessalonians 3:13** ...the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.

**Jude 1:14** — “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints,

**Zechariah 14:5** Thus the LORD my God will come, And all the saints with You.

6. The rapture, is a mystery (1 cor 15) and nobody knows the day or hour (mark 13, matt 24), but the second coming, will take place after a series of events and should be somewhat predictable (Rev 4-18)

Imminency

**1 Corinthians 1:7**...eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ

**Philippians 3:20** — For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ...

**Titus 2:13** — looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

**1 Peter 1:13** — Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ

**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.

Clement of Rome (35-95 AD)

Of a truth, soon and suddenly shall His will be accomplished, as the Scripture also bears witness, saying, Speedily will He come, and will not tarry; and, The Lord shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Holy One, for whom ye look.

7. The second coming occurs after the great and terrible tribulation (Revelation chapters 6–19). The rapture delivers from the tribulation (1 Thessalonians 4:18, 5:9&11, Revelation 3:10, Luke 21:36)

**Revelation 3:10** — “Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

**Luke 21:36** — “Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.”