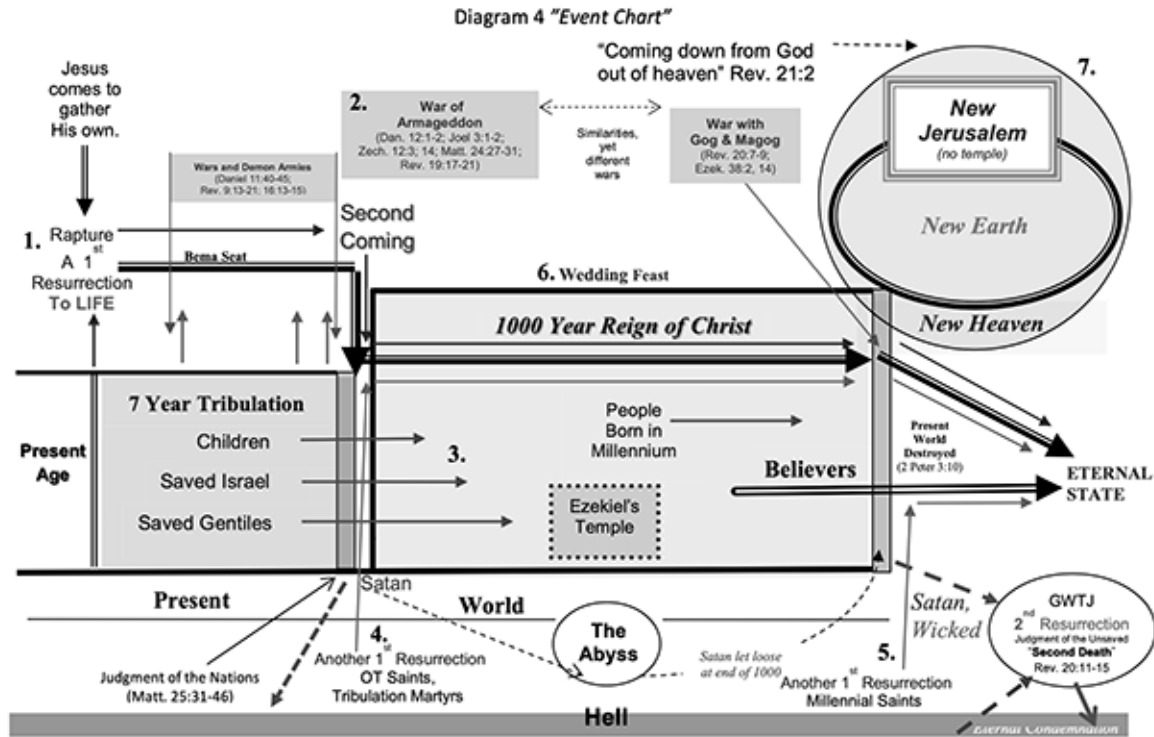


WEEK 5 | OUTLINE OF FUTURE EVENTS



LIFE BETWEEN WEEKS 69 AND 70

“Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place. ²⁵ Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time. ²⁶ And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed. ²⁷ And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.”

– Daniel 9:24-27

“Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city”

Daniel begins with a summary statement. Literally, “seventy sevens” are decreed for “you people,” the people of Israel, and “your holy city,” the city of Jerusalem. The focus of God’s plan during these seventy weeks is the nation of Israel and the city of Jerusalem.

“to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity”

This is a description of what the Messiah would accomplish in his first advent.

“to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place.”

Though it may not have been readily apparent to Daniel, this second set of three accomplishments were not fulfilled at Christ’s first coming but await his return.

“Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem”

This is likely a reference to the decree of Artaxerxes in 458BC as recorded in the book of Ezra 7:11-28. In it, Ezra and “anyone of the people of Israel. . . who freely offers to go to Jerusalem” (v. 13) are sent to the promised land “to make inquiries about Judah and Jerusalem according to the Law of your God” (v. 14). Not only this, but Artaxerxes pledges whatever support is necessary—“Whatever is decreed by the God of heaven, let it be done in full for the house of the God of heaven” (v. 23)—for the rebuilding of the city and the temple and the reinstatement of the sacrificial system (vv. 15-20).

“to the coming of an anointed one, a prince”

The second temporal marker given is the coming of the Messiah based on the timing of the first 69 weeks (see below), the likely date of the “coming of an anointed one,” the Messiah, was in 26AD when Jesus was baptized, as narrated in Matthew 3:13-17. God declared that Jesus was His “beloved Son” with whom He is “well pleased” (v. 17). This event marked the beginning of Jesus’ public ministry and could well be described as the “coming” of the Messiah, the anointed one.

“there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time.”

The first seven weeks, or “sevens,” covers the ministries of Ezra and Nehemiah from 458-409BC (49 years), during which time the city of Jerusalem and the temple were rebuilt. This period was indeed “a troubled time,” as the people of Jerusalem encountered great opposition over rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem, repairing the temple, and reinstating the Mosaic law.

The second 62 weeks spans from 409BC – 26AD (434 years), which is approximately when Jesus was baptized. Thus, the first 69 weeks are completed by the time of Jesus coming.

“And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing.”

After the sixty two weeks (though how long after is not specified), the Messiah will be “cut off” and “shall have nothing.” This is a description of Jesus’ isolation and lonely death on the cross. Yet, it is on the cross that Jesus secured the first three accomplishments listed in vs. 24: “to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity.” In short, Jesus dealt with sin in his first advent.

“And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed.”

The other event that takes place “after the sixty-two weeks” is the destruction of the city and the sanctuary by “the people of the prince to who is to come.” This is a reference to the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 70AD by the Romans, led by General Titus. Jesus himself prophesied this in Matthew 23:37-24:2.

An important takeaway from this passage is to note that these events take place in between weeks 69 and 70. We see the commencement of week 70 begins when “the prince” makes “a strong covenant with many for one week.” Even here in Daniel 9 it becomes evident that the last of the 70 weeks does not follow immediately on the heels of week 69.

Later revelation helps us understand that this period is “the time of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24) during which salvation is extended to the Gentiles while “a partial hardening has come upon Israel” (Rom 11:25). This intervening period has a terminus: when “the fullness of the Gentiles has come in” (Rom 11:25). God’s focus right now is on the nations and the building up of the

church of Christ. We are living in that time period. However, at the appropriate time, Daniel's 70 weeks will resume with the final week and God's focus will shift back to Israel, His purposes for the church having been completed.

THE RAPTURE

The Rapture "refers to the eschatological event of both dead and living believers being caught up together in a moment in the twinkling of an eye to meet Jesus in the air."¹ The term is drawn from the Latin *rapiō*, meaning "to seize or snatch away," a translation of the Greek *harpazō*, meaning "to be caught up." You can hear the English word "harpoon," which provides a powerful image of this event. The doctrine is primarily drawn from two New Testament passages:

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. ¹⁴ For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁵ For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ 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 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. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.

– *1 Thessalonians 4:13-18*

I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹ Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 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 imperishable, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:

"Death is swallowed up in victory."

⁵⁵ "O death, where is your victory?"

¹ Alan S. Bandy, "The Rapture Question," <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/essay/the-rapture-question/>.

O death, where is your sting?”

– 1 Corinthians 15:50-55

It’s worth noting some parallels between the two passages above:

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18	1 Corinthians 15:50-55
“caught up” (“to be snatched away”)	“in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye”
“the sound of the trumpet of God”	“the trumpet will sound”
“the dead in Christ will rise first”	“the dead will be raised imperishable”
“Then we who are alive, who are left”	“and we shall all be changed”

The rapture is a “mystery,” which means it was not taught in the Old Testament—something that often becomes a point of criticism from those who reject the rapture as an event taught in Scripture. Interestingly, the church is also a mystery (Eph 3:3-9; Col 1:24-27). Given that the entire church program was a mystery and not revealed until the New Testament, it is not surprising that the church’s terminus—the rapture—is also a mystery only revealed in the New Testament.

The rapture can also be distinguished from the second coming:

- At the rapture the Lord “descends from heaven” (1 Thess 4:16) and comes “in the clouds” where we meet him “in the air” (1 Thess 4:17). The emphasis is that the Lord does not come all the way to earth.
- At the second coming, the Lord will descend and “On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives” (Zech 14:4). The Lord will not stay “in the air,” but will return all the way to earth.

THE RAPTURE	THE SECOND COMING
1 Thess 4:13-17; 1 Cor 15:51-53; Jn 14:1-3	Joel 3:12-16; Rev 19:11-21; Zech 14:1-5; Matt 24:29-31
Saints meet Christ in the air	The Lord descends to the Mount of Olives
The Lord comes to bless His people without any reference to judgment	The emphasis is on the judgment that falls on unbelievers of the world
No reference in context to Millennium	Emphasis on the establishment of the Millennium

Both living & dead saints receive glorified bodies	No reference made to the glorification of bodies
Rapture occurs before the wrath of God is poured out	Second Coming occurs after the wrath of God is poured out
Imminent	Signs and events must take place
The Lord returns to heaven with His saints	The Lord descends and remains on earth
All believers are removed from the earth leaving only unbelievers	All unbelievers are removed from the earth leaving only the righteous

The clear teaching of these passages is that the Lord Jesus will descend from heaven to rapture his church at some point in the future prior to his physical return to earth. The question now becomes, when? Three general views prevail: 1) pre-tribulation, 2) mid-tribulation, or 3) post-tribulation.

1) Pre-Tribulation

This view argues the rapture will occur before the commencement of Daniel’s 70th week, the tribulation period. This is based in part on the promise that “God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thessalonians 5:9). This closely follows Paul’s discussion of the Rapture and the Day of the Lord, a time of “sudden destruction” (5:3), indicating that the events of the end times are on Paul’s mind still as he writes this. This is further strengthened by the fact that, after his description of the Rapture and his promise that believers will be spared God’s wrath, Paul tells us to “encourage one another” (4:18; 5:10). This promise aligns closely to Christ’s promise in Revelation 3:10, “Because you have kept my word about patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth.” It seems clear the church will be spared the unique outpouring of God’s wrath that characterizes the Tribulation Period:

- Matt 24:21; Jer 30:7; Dan 12:1; Joel 2:2

Perhaps more important, however, is the purpose of Daniel’s 70th week. Daniel’s seventy sevens are concerning “[Daniel’s] people” and “[Daniel’s] holy place.” In other words, the focus of those 70 weeks is the nation of Israel and Jerusalem. It would make sense, then, that the church would no longer be present at that moment in history when God’s attention refocuses on Israel. It is notable that there is no more mention of the church after Revelation 4:1 until near the end of the book in 22:15. The focus on Israel during the Tribulation can be seen in other passages:

- It is described as the “time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jer 30:7)

- It has a decidedly Jewish character (Deut 4:30; Dan 12:1; Ezek 20:37; Zech 13:8-9; Matt 24:15-20)

Additionally, a pre-Tribulational Rapture allows for several events detailed in Scripture to unfold, including the bema seat judgement (2 Cor 5:10) and the marriage supper between the Bride and the Lamb (Rev 19:6-10). It also fulfills Jesus' promise to his disciples that he "will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also" (John 14:3), something that the post-Tribulational view excludes.

2) Mid-Tribulation²

This position argues that the Rapture takes place at the mid-point of Daniel's 70th week, approximately 3.5 years into the 7-year period.³ This is based on the idea that the Tribulation Period—the pouring out of God's wrath—does not encompass the whole of Daniel's 70th week. Rather, it begins at the midway point of the 70th week with the 7 bowl judgments listed in Revelation 14:17-18:24. These are the "events" of the Tribulation. The first half of the 70th week is marked by the "signs" of the tribulation (the seven seals and seven trumpets of Revelation 5-9), which in actuality are characteristic of the entirety of the church age but will occur with greater frequency as the Tribulation Period draws near (Matthew 24:5-8).

Problematically, this view seems to introduce an artificial distinction between "signs" and "events." In John 5:22 and 27 Jesus identifies that the Father "has given all judgment to the Son." When the Son is identified as the only one worthy to take and open the scroll and its seals, judgments begin to fall on the earth. Thus, we should view all the judgments—the seals, the trumpets, and the bowls—as God's wrath and part of the Great Tribulation.

3) Post-Tribulation

This position argues that the Rapture and the Second Coming are, in effect, one and the same event. Believers will be caught up and meet the Lord in the air, and he will lead them down to earth in victory. This position argues that the term rapture is actually a reference to the doctrine of the bodily saints, which is only one element of the Second Coming, which under this schematic is a single-stage event.

² It should be noted that the mid-Tribulation position shares many of the arguments presented for the Pre-Tribulation Rapture.

³ There is a closely related view known as the Pre-Wrath view, which times the Rapture closer to the end of the Tribulation Period, not necessarily in the middle of it.

There are several weaknesses to this view. First, it contradicts the clear statements of Scripture that believers will not experience God's wrath for sin. Second, it fails to address the lack of reference to the church in Revelation 4-21. Third, and perhaps most significantly, it fails to address the presence of unglorified saints capable of producing children in the millennial kingdom. To hold this view would necessitate abandoning the premillennialism, a position for which there is substantial support in Scripture.

THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST & THE MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB

One of the reasons a distinction between the Rapture and the Second Coming is necessary is because there are certain events that transpire in heaven which can only be placed at some point during that intervening period.

The first is the *bema* seat (Rom 14:10; 2 Cor 5:10), the judgment seat of Christ. The *bema* was a raised platform on which judges would sit and observe athletic events. The judges were tasked with ensuring that the rules were followed, and to dispense rewards to the victors; it was never a place of punishment.

Paul tells us "we will all stand before the judgment seat of God" (Rom 14:10). Paul sheds more light on this event in his second letter to the Corinthians: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil" (2 Cor 5:10). The judgment seat of Christ, then, involves a time in the future when all believers will stand before our Lord and give an account for what we have done in service to him. This judgment does not determine our salvific state; rather, it determines our reward. The Lord Jesus will examine our works and assess our faithfulness to him given the resources he entrusted to us (1 Cor 3:10-15).

The second event that takes place in heaven during the interval between the Rapture and the Second Coming—the Tribulation—is the marriage supper of the Lamb described in Revelation 19:7-10. According to Jewish tradition, the marriage supper was the third and culminating phase of a betrothal, during which the bride and groom and their friends and family would celebrate the end of their betrothal and the consummation of their wedding. The explanation below illustrates the significance of this event:

These wedding customs had three major parts. First, a marriage contract was signed by the parents of the bride and the bridegroom, and the parents of the

bridegroom or the bridegroom himself would pay a dowry to the bride or her parents. This began what was called the betrothal period—what we would today call the engagement. . . The second step in the process usually occurred much later, when the bridegroom, accompanied by his male friends, went to the house of the bride. If he came in the night, he and his companions would create a torchlight parade through the streets. The bride would know in advance this was going to take place, and so she would be ready with her maidens, and they would all join the parade and end up at the bridegroom’s home. This custom is the basis of the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25:1–13. The third phase was the marriage supper itself, which might go on for days, as illustrated by the wedding at Cana in John 2:1–2.

What John’s vision in Revelation pictures is the wedding feast of the Lamb (Jesus Christ) and His bride (the Church) in its third phase. The implication is that the first two phases have already taken place. The first phase was completed on earth when each individual believer placed his or her faith in Christ as Savior. The dowry paid by the bridegroom’s parent (God the Father) would be the blood of Christ shed on the Bride’s behalf. The Church on earth today, then, is “betrothed” to Christ, and, like the wise virgins in the parable, all believers should be watching and waiting for the appearance of the Bridegroom (the rapture). The second phase symbolizes the rapture of the Church, when Christ comes to claim His bride and take her to the Father’s house. The marriage supper then follows as the third and final step. . . Attending the wedding feast will be not only the Church as the Bride of Christ, but others as well. The “others” include the Old Testament saints—they will not have been resurrected yet, but their souls/spirits will be in heaven with us. As the angel told John to write, “Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb” (Revelation 19:9). The marriage supper of the Lamb is a glorious celebration of all who are in Christ!⁴

⁴ <https://www.gotquestions.org/marriage-supper-Lamb.html>