



The End Times

WEEK 3: THE RAPTURE, THE
TRIBULATION, AND THE ANTICHRIST

Clarifications

- ▶ Rev. 20: Is the resurrection to the intermediate state of martyrs only, or all the faithful?

Revelation 20:4–5 [4] Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the **souls of those who had been beheaded** for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, **and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands.** They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. [5] **The rest of the dead** did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. [6] **Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection!** **Over such the second death has no power,** but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand

The Great Tribulation

Matthew 24:15–28

[15] “So when you see the **abomination of desolation** spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), [16] then let those who are in **Judea flee to the mountains**. [17] Let the one who is on the housetop not go down to take what is in his house, [18] and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. [19] And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! [20] Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath. [21] For then there will be **great tribulation**, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be.

The Great Tribulation

Matthew 24:15–28

[22] And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short.

[23] Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There he is!' do not believe it. [24] For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. [25] See, I have told you beforehand. [26] So, if they say to you, 'Look, he is in the wilderness,' do not go out. If they say, 'Look, he is in the inner rooms,' do not believe it. [27] For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. [28] Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather. (ESV)

The Great Tribulation

Revelation 7:13–14

[13] Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, “Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?” [14] I said to him, “Sir, you know.” And he said to me, “These are the ones coming out of **the great tribulation**. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. (ESV)

The Great Tribulation

▶ The Futurist Views:

- ▶ Postmil. and Amil. → Brief, indefinite period at the end of the millennium, associated with “Gog and Magog” of Rev. 20:8-9
- ▶ Historic Premil. → A brief, undetermined period right before the millennium
- ▶ Disp. Premil. → Sees it as the latter half of the seven-year “70th week” of Dan. 9:27
 - ▶ 42 months (3.5 years) in Rev. 11:2, 13:5 = “times, times and half a time” in Dan. 7:25, 12:7

▶ The Preterist View: The destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD

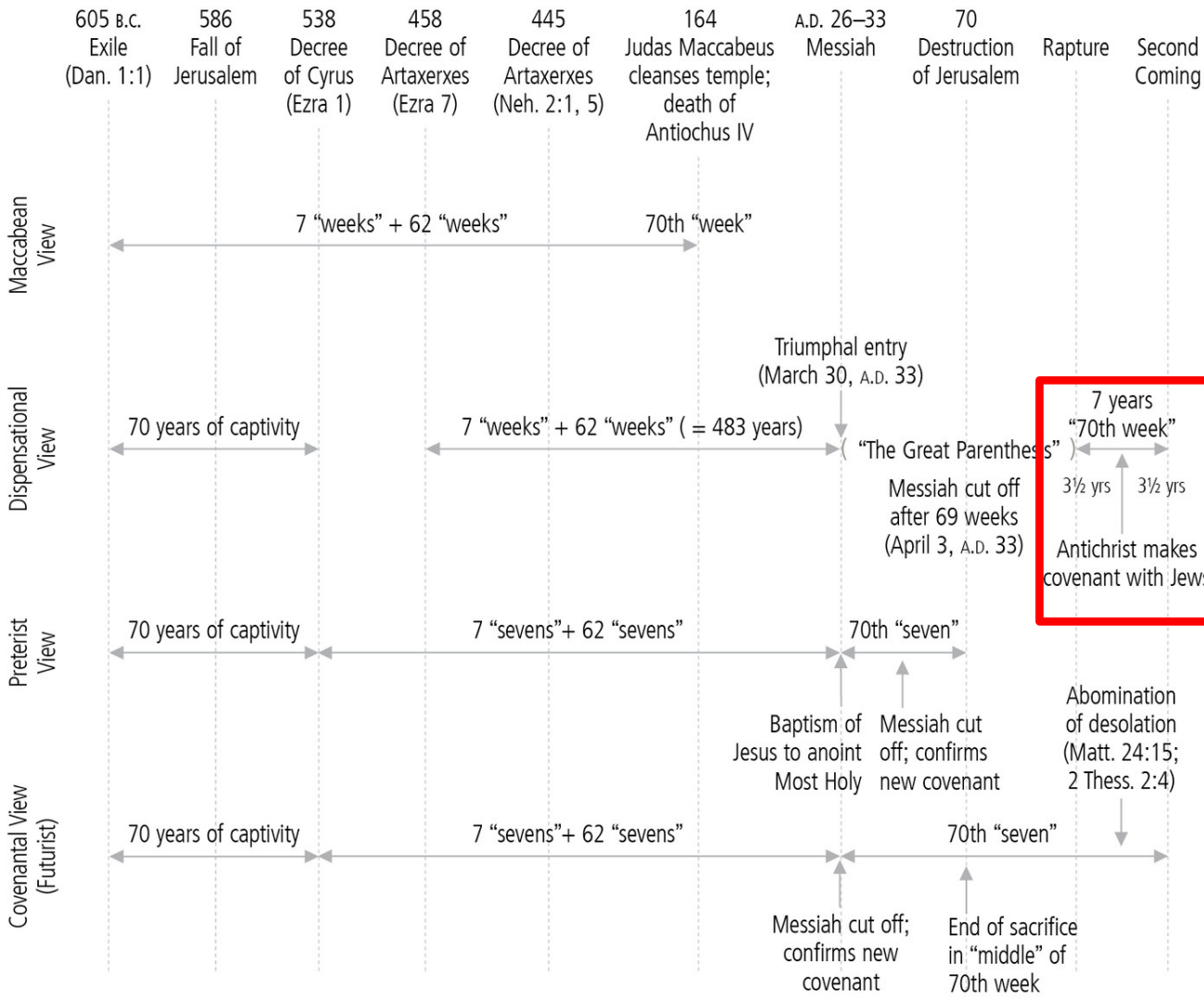
The Great Tribulation

Revelation 20:7-10

[7] And when the thousand years are ended, **Satan will be released from his prison [8] and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea.** [9] And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them, [10] and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. (ESV)

The Great Tribulation

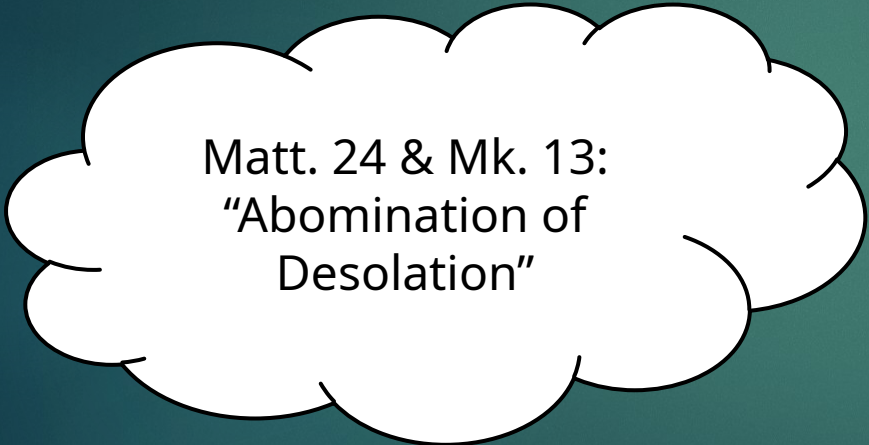
Daniel 9:24-27 [24] **“Seventy weeks** are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place. [25] Know therefore and understand 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. And 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.” (ESV)



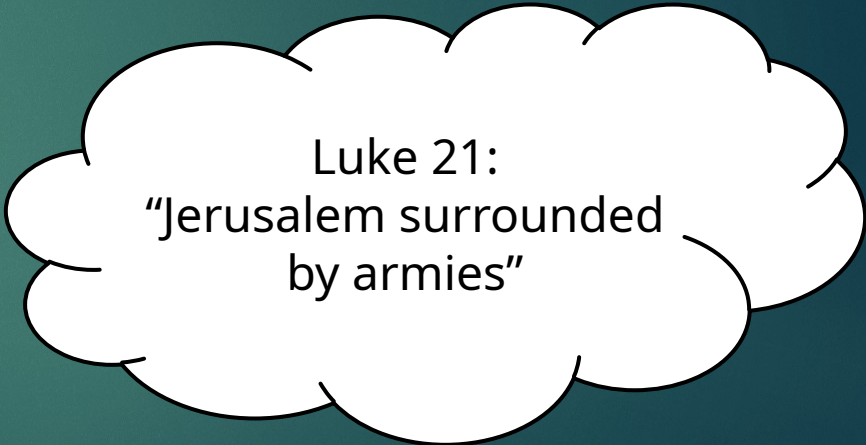
70 Weeks of Daniel 9

Source: ESV Study Bible

The Great Tribulation: The Destruction of Jerusalem



Matt. 24 & Mk. 13:
"Abomination of
Desolation"



Luke 21:
"Jerusalem surrounded
by armies"

“The Great Tribulation”

- ▶ My view:
 - ▶ The Great Tribulation of Matt. 24 is the destruction of Jerusalem (**a past event**), the tribulation of Revelation continues through the church age (**a present event**) and at the end of the “millennium” when Satan is released, there may very well be an intensification of suffering (**a future event**).
- ▶ For further reading:
 - ▶ RT France’s commentaries on Mark (NIGTC) and Matthew (NICNT)

The Rapture

1 Thessalonians 4:14–18

[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. (ESV)

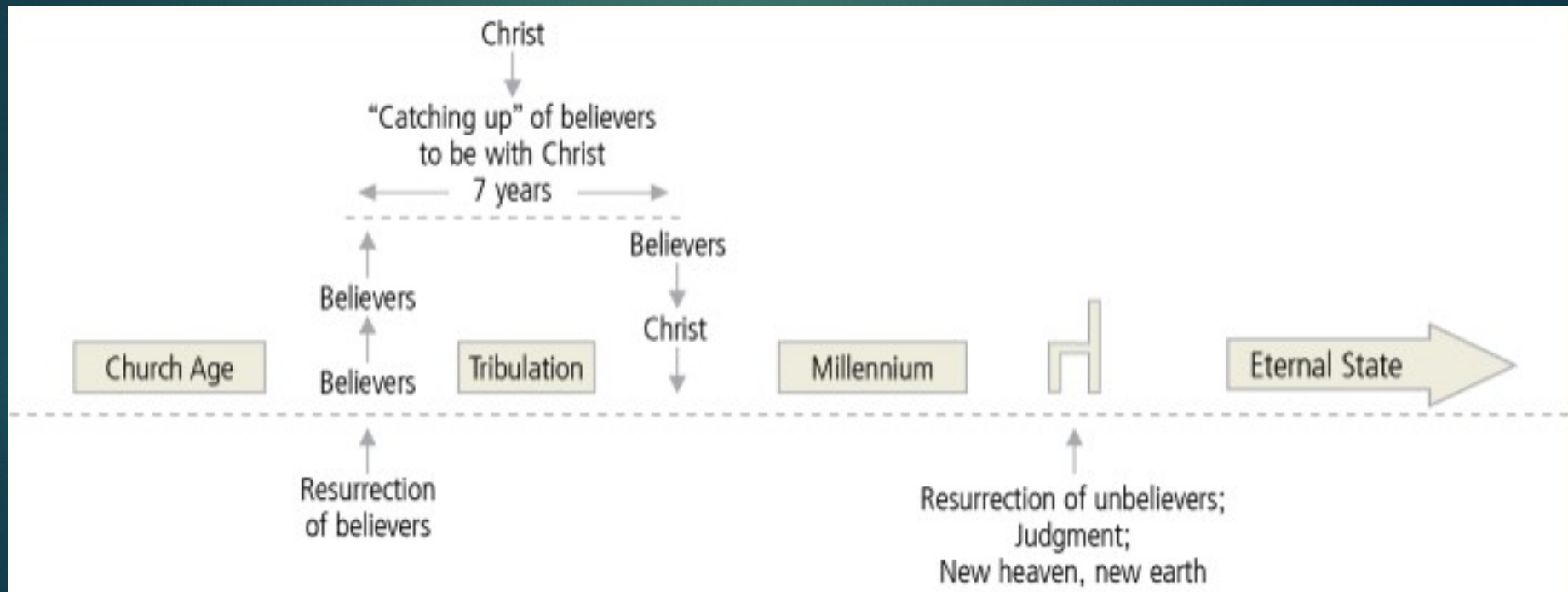
The Rapture

- ▶ “Caught up” → *arpazo*
 - ▶ Snatched up, scooped up
 - ▶ Used in other supernatural events
- ▶ What Christians (mostly) agree on:
 - ▶ This will happen!
- ▶ What Christians disagree on:
 - ▶ Timing and sequencing
 - ▶ Pre-Trib; Post-Trib; Mid-Trib

The Rapture: Pre-Tribulation View

- ▶ Associated with Dispensational Premillennialism
- ▶ There will be a great tribulation upon the earth
 - ▶ 7 years according to Daniel
 - ▶ 3.5 years according to Revelation
 - ▶ During this time, the world is dominated by the Antichrist
- ▶ Before this tribulation occurs, the church will be raptured
- ▶ While the church is gone, people can be converted
- ▶ At the end of the tribulation, Christ will return to inaugurate the millennium

The Pre-Tribulation Rapture (Pre-Mil)

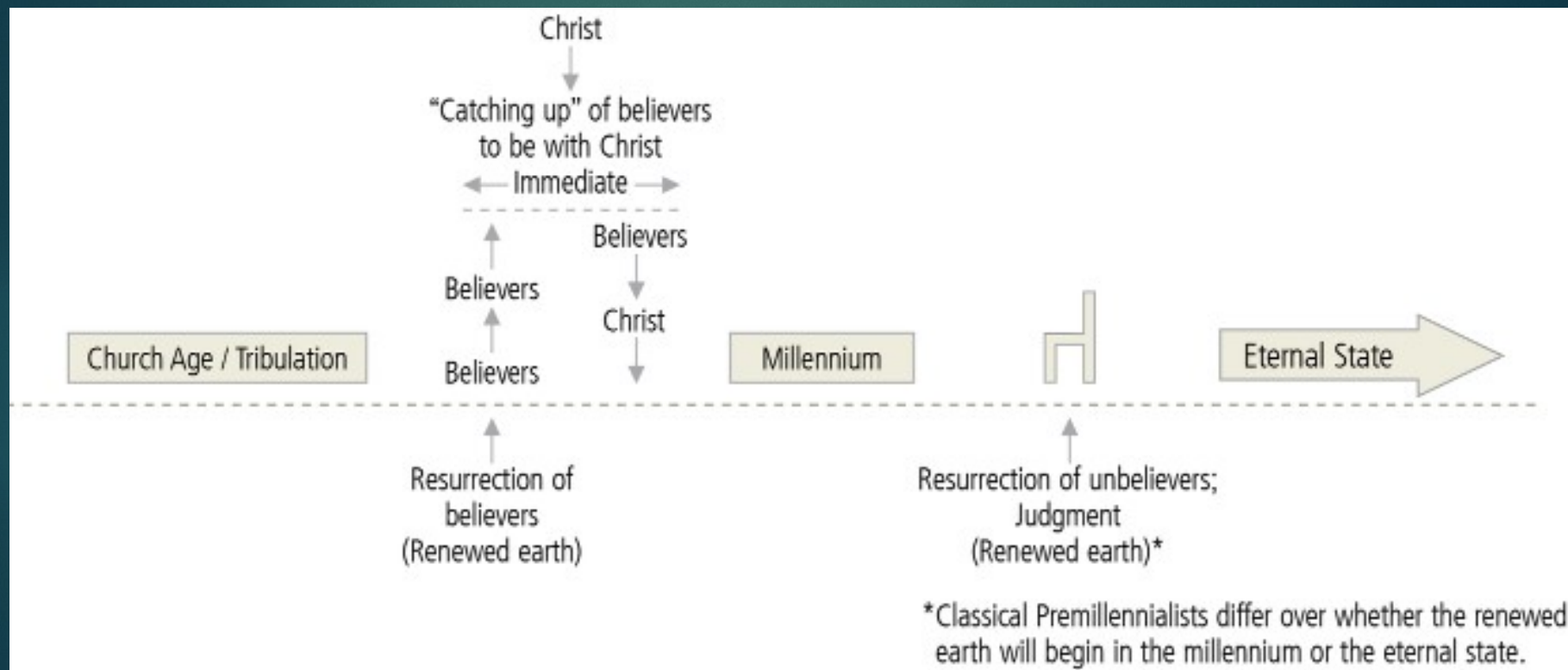


Source: ESV Study Bible

The Rapture: Post-Tribulation View

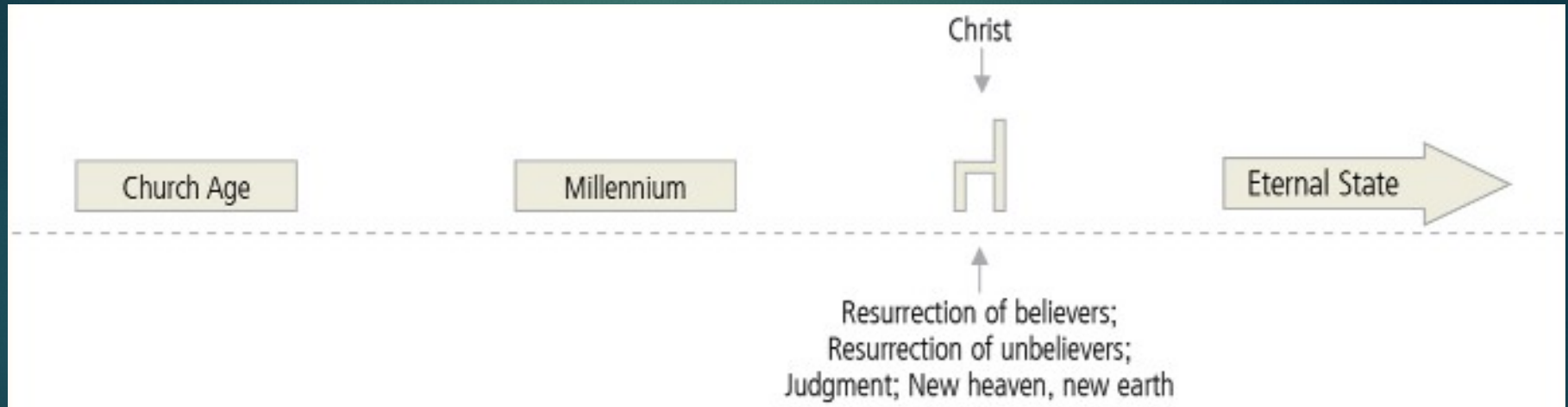
- ▶ This view is often associated with Historic Premillennialism
- ▶ The Church is endlessly enduring tribulation
 - ▶ However, it will increase to universal scale
 - ▶ With the emergence of the Antichrist, the whole church will suffer (perhaps for 7 years, perhaps not)
- ▶ At the end of the tribulation, Christ will appear and rapture the church

The Post-Tribulation Rapture (Premil)



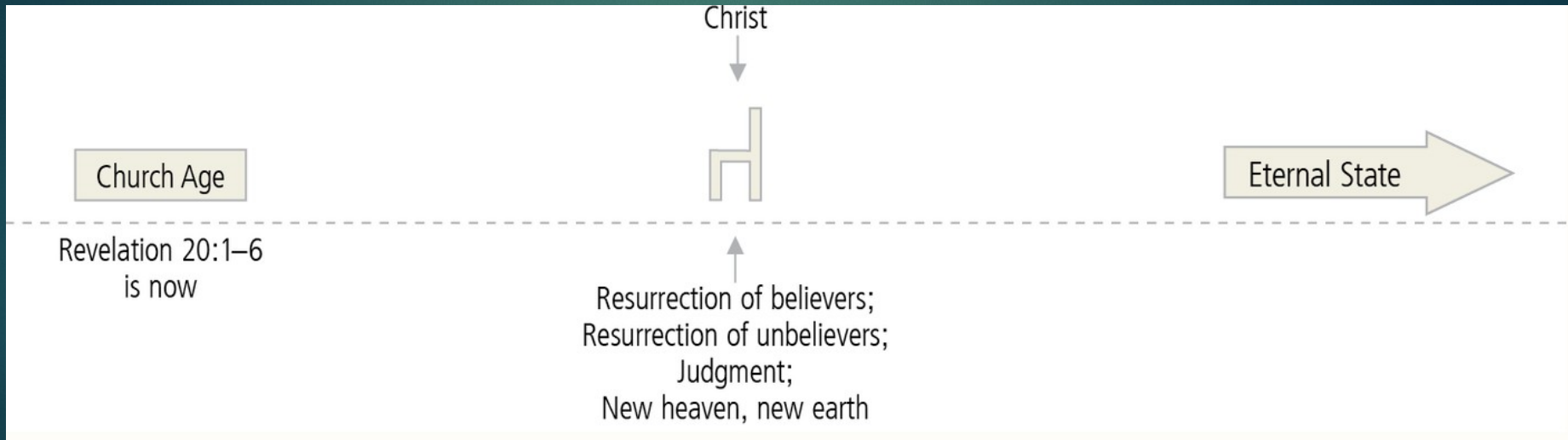
Source: ESV Study Bible

Postmillennialism



Source: ESV Study Bible

Amillennialism



Source: ESV Study Bible

The Rapture: Comparing

- ▶ Post-Tribulation View is the view of historic pre-millennialism
 - ▶ Though timing of millennium is different for Amil and Postmil, this term is sufficient for their views of the rapture
- ▶ Pre-Tribulation View developed by J.N. Darby
 - ▶ Sees the rapture at the beginning of chapter 4 of Rev
 - ▶ Very contemporary concept

The Rapture: Arguments for Pre-Trib

- ▶ 1 Thess 1:10: "Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come"
- ▶ Rev. 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."
- ▶ Church is not mentioned after Rev 4 (thus removed)
- ▶ Can happen at any time: "No one knows the hour"

The Rapture: Arguments for Post-Trib

- ▶ Rev. 3:10 “I will keep you from” → spiritual protection, not physical removal
 - ▶ John 17:15 “I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.”
- ▶ Post-trib: Pre-trib reads far too much into the text
 - ▶ 2 Thess 4: Believers caught up, unbelievers not. Doesn't say they are left behind *in the tribulation*.
- ▶ In Rev. the majority of the book doesn't apply to believers

The Rapture: Arguments for Post-Trib

- ▶ What is the nature of the “surprise” of the *parousia*?

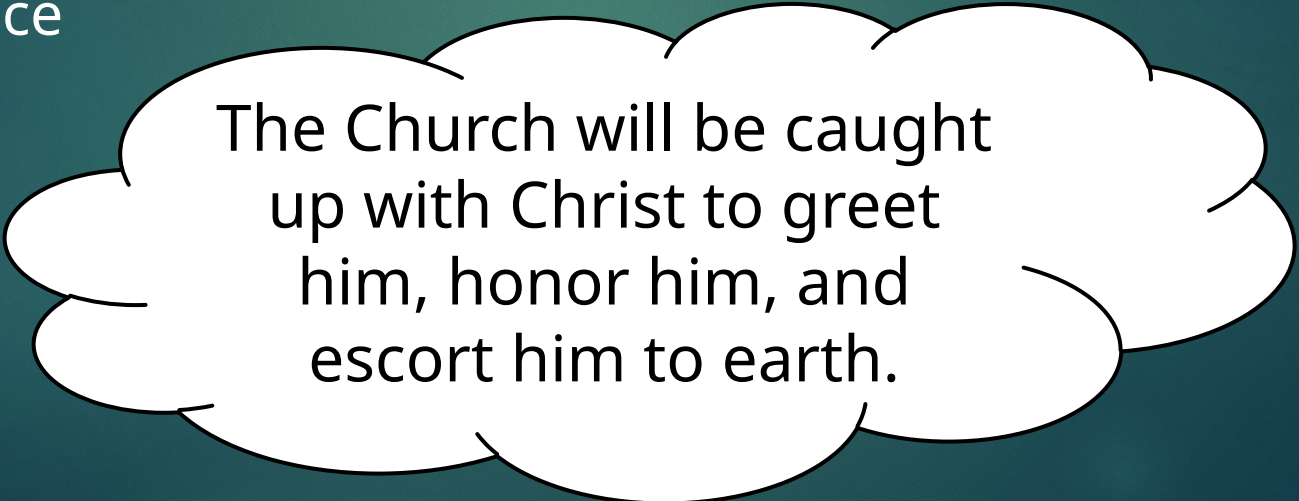
1 Thessalonians 5:1–6 [1] Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. [2] For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. [3] While people are saying, “There is peace and security,” then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. **[4] But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief.** [5] For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. [6] So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober.

The Point of the Rapture

- ▶ “ When a dignitary paid an official visit (parousia) to a city in Hellenistic times, the action of the leading citizens in going out to meet him and escort him back on the final stage of his journey was called the [apantesin].” – FF Bruce

The Point of the Rapture

- ▶ “When a dignitary paid an official visit (parousia) to a city in Hellenistic times, the action of the leading citizens in going out to meet him and escort him back on the final stage of his journey was called the [apantesin].” – FF Bruce



The Church will be caught up with Christ to greet him, honor him, and escort him to earth.

The Antichrist in Scripture

1 John / 2 John:
"Antichrist"

Revelation:
"The Sea Beast" &
"The Land Beast"

2 Thess:
"The Man of
Lawlessness"

The Gospels:
"False Christs"

Daniel:
"The little horn"

The Antichrist in 1 and 2 John

1 John 2:18 Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that **antichrist** is coming, so now many **antichrists** have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour. (ESV)

1 John 2:22 Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the **antichrist**, he who denies the Father and the Son. (ESV)

1 John 4:3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the **antichrist**, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. (ESV)

2 John 7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the **antichrist**. (ESV)

The Beast(s) in Rev. 13

Revelation 13:1–8

[1] And I saw a beast **rising out of the sea**, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads. [2] And the beast that I saw was like a leopard; its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. **And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority...**[4] And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?" [5] **...it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months.** [6] It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven.

The Beast(s) in Rev. 13

Revelation 13:1–8

[7] Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation, [8] and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.

The Beast(s) in Rev. 13

Revelation 13:11–18

[11] **Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth.** It had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon. [12] It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and **makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast,** whose mortal wound was healed. [13] It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in front of people, [14] **and by the signs that it is allowed to work in the presence of the beast it deceives those who dwell on earth,** telling them to make an image for the beast that was wounded by the sword and yet lived

The Beast(s) in Rev. 13

Revelation 13:11–18

[16] Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or the forehead, [17] so that no one can buy or sell unless he has **the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name.** [18] This calls for wisdom: let the one who has understanding **calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and his number is 666.**
(ESV)

The Sea Beast of Rev. 13

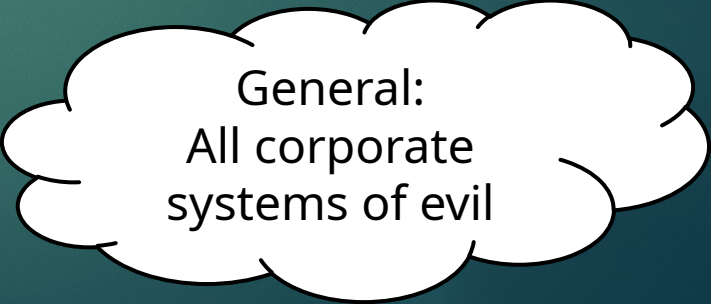
- ▶ Significance of the Sea and Sea Monsters in OT
- ▶ 10 horns link him w/ 4th beast of Dan. 7, but also incorporates features of all 4 of Daniel's beasts (composite)
- ▶ Receives all but universal worship

The Sea Beast of Rev. 13

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- ▶ 10 horns link him w/ 4th beast of Dan. 7, but also incorporates features of all 4 of Daniel's beasts (composite)
- ▶ Receives all but universal worship
- ▶ Likely referents:



Immediate:
Rome



General:
All corporate
systems of evil

The Sea Beast of Rev. 13

"[The beast] is not to be identified in its description with any one historical form of its expression or with any one institutional aspect of its manifestation. In other words, the beast may appear now as Sodom, Egypt, Rome or even Jerusalem and may manifest itself as a political power, an economic power, a religious power, or a heresy ... This interpretation does not exclude the possibility that there will be a final climactic appearance of the beast in history in a person; in a political, religious, or economic system; or in a final totalitarian culture combining all these. The point is that the beast cannot be limited to either the past or the future." -- Alan Johnson

The Land Beast of Rev. 13

- ▶ This beast = false prophet of 16:30, 19:20, 20:10.
- ▶ The land beast makes people worship the sea beast
- ▶ Primary work is deception and false teaching
- ▶ “Whereas the first beast speaks loudly and defiantly against God, the second beast makes the first beast’s claims sound plausible and persuasive.” – G. K. Beale
- ▶ Likely Referent:

Immediate:
Roman Imperial
Priesthood or Jewish
religious system

General:
False teachers and
prophets throughout
church history

The Mark of the Beast and 666

- ▶ Historical View:
 - ▶ “Calculate the number”
 - ▶ Nero, the Neronian Persecution, and the Nero Myth
 - ▶ Gematria and Isopsephism

The Gematria of 666

Greek:

Neron → nrwn qsr = 666

Νερων → נרון קסר = 666

= נ, 50 = ר, 200 = ו, 6 = |, 50 = ק, 100 = ס, 60 = ר, 200

The Gematria of 666

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Neron → nrwn qsr = 666

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= נ, 50 = ר, 50 = ו, 200 = 6, 1 = 50, 7 = 100, ס = 60, ר = 200

Latin

Nero → nrw qsr = 616

נ = 50, ר = 200 = 6, 1 = 50, 7 = 100, ס = 60, ר = 200

The Isopsephism of 666

- ▶ Isopsphism → establishes a connection between two words by showing their numerical values are the same
- ▶ “Let him who has wisdom calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man”
- ▶ Gk word for beast transliterated into Hebrew = ?

The Isopsephism of 666

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- ▶ “Let him who has wisdom calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man”
- ▶ Gk word for beast transliterated into Hebrew = 666
- ▶ *Nero = The Beast*
- ▶ For more on the mathematical significance of 666 and it's ties to Nero, see *The Climax of Prophecy* by Richard Bauckham

The Mark of the Beast and 666

- ▶ Historical View:
 - ▶ “Calculate the number”
 - ▶ Nero, the Neronian Persecution, and the Nero Myth
 - ▶ Gematria and Isopsephism
- ▶ Symbolic View:
 - ▶ Describes, rather than identifies
 - ▶ Mathematical significance of 666

The Man of Lawlessness of 2 Thess.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-12

[1] Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, [2] not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. [3] Let no one deceive you in any way. **For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed**, the son of destruction, [4] who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that **he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God**. [5] Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? [6] **And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time.**

The Man of Lawlessness of 2 Thess.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-12

[7] For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. [8] And then the lawless one will be **revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. [9] The **coming** of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, [10] and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. [11] Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, [12] in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (ESV)**

The Man of Lawlessness of 2 Thess.

- ▶ “Takes his seat in the Temple of God”
- ▶ “Restrainer”
 - ▶ Civil gov’t, the preaching of the gospel, an angel, common grace?
- ▶ “Mystery of lawlessness” = spirit of antichrist?
- ▶ Preterist, Idealist, Futurist?

The Man of Lawlessness of 2 Thess.

- ▶ “Takes his seat in the Temple of God”
- ▶ “Restrainer”
 - ▶ Civil gov’t, the preaching of the gospel, an angel, common grace?
- ▶ “Mystery of lawlessness” = spirit of antichrist?
- ▶ Preterist, Idealist, Futurist?
- ▶ Conclusion: Futurist view seems best

Summing up the Antichrist

- ▶ The spirit of Antichrist is both past, present and future (per 1 & 2 John)
- ▶ Antichrist can include systems and corporate structures (per Revelation)
- ▶ There will likely be intensification of Antichrist at the very end in the form of a person (per 2 Thess)

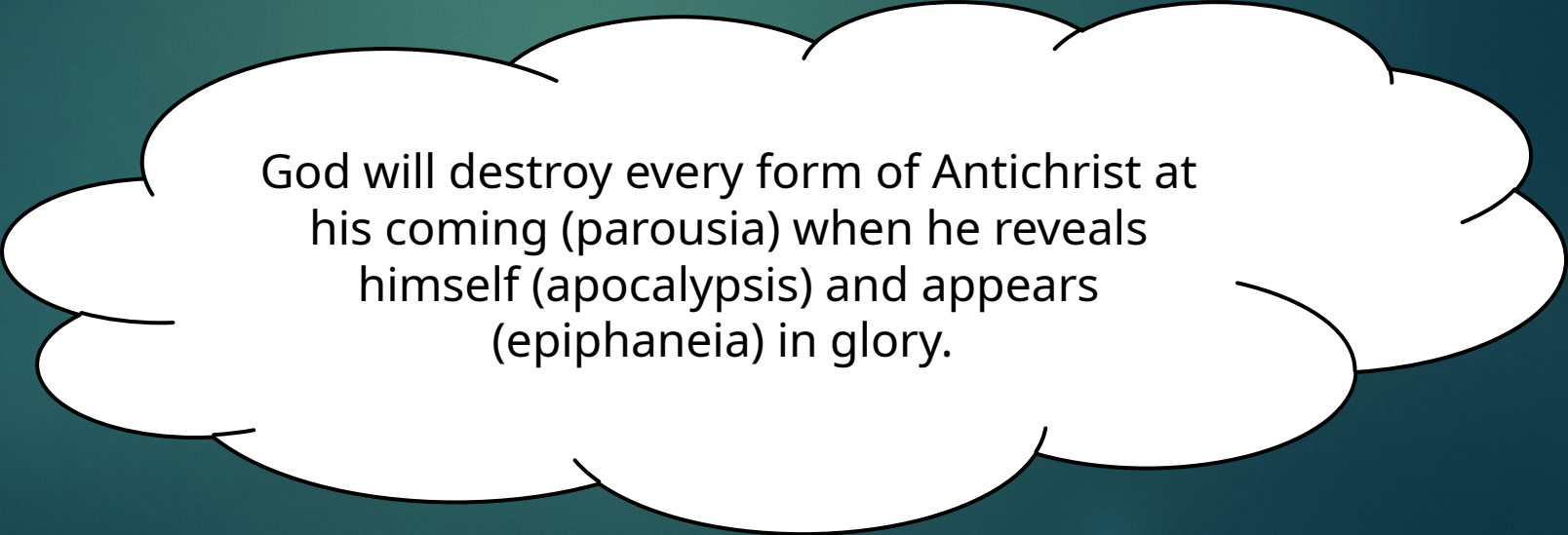
Summing up the Antichrist

- ▶ The spirit of Antichrist is both past, present and future (per 1 & 2 John)
- ▶ Antichrist can include composite systems and corporate structures (per Revelation)
- ▶ There will likely be intensification of Antichrist at the very end in the form of a person (per 2 Thess)

Summing up the Antichrist

“As for a possible further application, the best policy might be for everyone who studies the matter to ask the question which came to the lips of the disciples in the upper room when they were told that one of them was a traitor: “Lord, is it I?” The spirit of Antichrist will be strengthened if Christians allow themselves to be seduced by it and to foster it in their hearts; it will be diminished and weakened if they individually watch for every manifestation of it within themselves, cast it out and wage unceasing war against it, confessing Jesus as Lord and Christ not in word only but in deed and in truth”. – FF Bruce

Summing up the Antichrist



God will destroy every form of Antichrist at his coming (parousia) when he reveals himself (apocalypsis) and appears (epiphaneia) in glory.

The Man of Lawlessness of 2 Thess.

2 Thessalonians 2:1–12

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End Times Conclusions



Revelation 1:17-18

[17] When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, [18] and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. (ESV)

Access to Slides

