

The Book of Revelation
Session 7: The Rapture and the Millennium

1. Rapture = “to be caught up”
 - a. Rooted in fundamentalist Protestant teaching
 - b. Secret return of Christ to take Christians into heaven before the Great Tribulation
 - c. Amounts to 3 advents of Christ: The Incarnation, the secret rapture, and his glorious return at the end of history
 - d. Minority view among Christians

2. Why did Christ come the first time, and why will he return?
 - a. First advent: The Incarnation
 - i. Mission Redeem fallen humanity and reconcile all creation to God (2 Corinthians 5:17-18)
 - ii. Destroyed power of death (Hebrews 2:14, 1 John 3:8)
 - iii. Satan allowed to remain active during present age
 - iv. Sacraments give Christians the grace needed to persevere

v. Number of saints and martyrs grows throughout time
(Revelation 6:9-11; 7:9, 13-14)

b. Second advent: Christ's glorious return at the end of time

i. Revelation 1:7

ii. Matthew 24:27

iii. 1 Thessalonians 4:17

1. Parousia: Arrival of dignitary in ancient times
(compare with Matthew 21:1-17)

iv. Final, public judgment (1 Corinthians 4:5).

3. Origins of the secret rapture doctrine: An American phenomenon

a. 18th century

i. Increase Mather: Christians will be caught up before the
final judgment.

ii. Morgan Edwards: Christians will be caught up 3.5 years
before the final judgment.

b. 19th century

- i. Manuel De Lacunza: The rapture will occur 45 days before the final judgment.
 - ii. William Miller: Christ will return in 1843 or 1844.
 - iii. John Nelson Darby: Dispensationalism
- c. 20th century
- i. C. I. Scofield: Extensively annotated the Scofield Reference Bible with John Nelson Darby's dispensationalist teachings.
 - ii. Hal Lindsay: *The Late Great Planet Earth* and dispensationalism
 - iii. Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins: *Left Behind* series and the secret rapture

4. Millenarianism

- a. Apocalyptic expectations
- b. Belief in an earthly reign of Christ prior to the end of time
- c. Demonstrates how savvy promoters can convince some Christians of unbiblical, unorthodox ideas

5. The secret rapture in the Bible?

a. 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17

b. Matthew 24:36-42

c. 1 Thessalonians 1:10, 5:9-10

6. Common variations of the secret rapture doctrine

a. Pre-tribulationist

b. Post-tribulationist

c. Mid-tribulationist

d. Partial tribulationist

7. The millennium (Revelation 20:1-10)

a. Premillennialist

b. Postmillennialist

c. Amillennialist (more accurately, “present millennialist”)

8. “The one who gives this testimony says, ‘Yes, I am coming soon.’ Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!” (Revelation 22:20)