

**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. 18<sup>th</sup> 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. 19<sup>th</sup> 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. 20<sup>th</sup> 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)