

Q6) What's wrong with the post-tribulation rapture theory?

Question: Some teach that the Rapture will occur at the end of the 7-year Tribulation when Christ returns to the earth. Why is this view wrong?

Answer: The Post-Tribulation Rapture theory teaches that the Church will not be raptured **before** the Tribulation but that it will pass through the Tribulation, and only when Christ returns at the end of the Tribulation will the Church be caught up. This theory must pass two tests. First, Does the Bible plainly say that the Church will be raptured when Christ returns at the end of the Tribulation? and second, If we adopt that position, how will it affect other events clearly foretold in Scripture? for *“no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation”* (2Pet.1:20).

We must understand that the Rapture relates exclusively to Church-age saints. It does not include Old Testament saints who were raised when Christ rose and took paradise to heaven (Matt.27:50-53; Eph.4:8-10; 2Cor.12:1-4).

Also, the Rapture described in 1Thess.4:13-18 and 1Cor.15:51-54 is for those who are *“in Christ”*, which uniquely describes all **believers since Pentecost**. These have been baptized by the Spirit into the Body of Christ (1Cor.12:13), and it is obvious that IF the Rapture of the Church were to occur at the end of the Tribulation there would be a serious conflict with other Scriptures.

TEST NO.1: Are there any Scriptures which speak of a resurrection of Church-age saints, both living and dead, when Christ returns at the end of the Tribulation?

The answer is, No. There is a resurrection of saints at the Second Coming (Rev.20:4) but it is only for **martyrs at the hands of Antichrist** during the 7-years of Great Tribulation. It may be argued that Antichrist and his followers will receive their resurrection bodies at that time and will be *“cast alive into a lake of fire”* according to Rev.19:20; Dan.12:2; and Matt.25:41, however, there is a total absence of any Scripture which states that there will be any resurrection of **living saints** when Christ returns. On the contrary, the living saints, both Jews and Gentiles, who survive the Tribulation, continue with natural bodies into the millennial kingdom.

Elsewhere we read that when Christ returns the saints come WITH Him, which requires that they be **previously** taken to heaven (Jude 14; Zech.14:5; 1Thess.3:13). At the Rapture, however, Christ comes exclusively FOR His Church, which cannot include Old Testament saints or Tribulation saints. The saints who are alive on earth at the Second Coming are not resurrected but go **alive** into the kingdom (Zech.14:16-21).

TEST NO.2: The Post-Tribulation Rapture theory is in conflict with the main sequence of events in the last days.

HERALD OF HOPE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q6) Some teach that the Rapture will occur at the end of the 7-year Tribulation when Christ returns to the earth. Why is this view wrong? (continued)

We know that the “*end of the age*” will be a short period of 7 years called the Great Tribulation or “*the time of Jacob’s (Israel’s) trouble*” (Jer.30:7), after which Christ will come. Matthew wrote:

“Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall...appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven” (Matt.24:29-30).

When the Lord appears in His glory He will set up a throne of judgment at Jerusalem and judge the **living nations who survive the Tribulation**. Redeemed Israel (the Lord’s brethren) and the saved Gentiles (sheep) will go alive into Christ’s millennial kingdom, and the unsaved Gentiles (goats) who followed Antichrist in the Tribulation period will be cast into “*everlasting fire*” (Matt.25:31-46). This sequence of events would be impossible if there was a post-Tribulation Rapture. Why?

Because **IF** there was a post-Tribulation Rapture every saved person on earth would have a resurrection body when Christ returned, and there would not be anyone left on earth for the millennial kingdom. However, Zechariah says that “*everyone that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles*” (Zech.14:16).

IF all the saved are raptured when Christ returns to reign it would be impossible for babies to be born in the millennial kingdom because Jesus said that “*in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage*” (Matt.22:30). Babies will be born, however, because at the end of the 1,000 years some unsaved will be deceived and rebel against Christ (Rev.20:7-9). Resurrected saints could not have children, or be deceived.

IF there was a post-Tribulation Rapture there would be no need for sacrifices in the millennial kingdom. However there are sacrifices in the Millennium in memorial of Christ’s sacrifice (Ezek.43 & 44; Zech.14:20-21).

We ask, Why would it be necessary for the ships of Tarshish to bring the saved Jews back to the land at the beginning of the Millennium, **IF** they have ALL been raptured? They would hardly need the ships of Tarshish to bring them in resurrected bodies, “*with their silver and gold*” (Isa 60:9).

Many other prophecies conflict with a post-Tribulation Rapture, and it is worth noting that the Seventh Day Adventists and Amillennialists hold to this view. Both fail to understand that the Great Tribulation is for only 7 years, and both completely miss Israel’s role in the millennial kingdom. The Post-Tribulation Rapture theory results from a failure to appreciate the relationship between Israel and the Church.

Only a pre-Tribulation Rapture of the Church can harmonize with Israel’s role in the last days and the events surrounding Christ’s return.

