

14. Three times in Revelation is the phrase, “I am coming soon”: Revelation 22:7, 12, 20. Remember, to the Lord, a day is a thousand years and a thousand years as a day. This statement was made in A.D. 96, and this is now A.D. 2023. Therefore, “soon” connotes imminency, not immediacy.
15. The Rapture of the Church is the next prophetic event to occur in history.
Titus 2:13 “Waiting with keen anticipation for that blessed hope [the Rapture], even the appearance of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus.” (EXT)
 - a. How do you wait with keen anticipation? You wait by thinking; you wait with patience, which is the application of doctrine. You know the Rapture is coming. It may not occur in your lifetime, but you still know it *is* coming. In this way you apply doctrine, are occupied with the Person of Jesus Christ, utilize plus-H, and virtue love, so that you have a wonderful life and death.
 - b. *Sic transit gloria mundi*: Latin: “Thus passes away the glory of the world” is true because it is based on the achievement of man, on visible heroes. But we are called to become invisible heroes by advancing to spiritual maturity.
 - c. Jesus Christ is the glory, the resurrection, and the life.
16. The imminency of the Rapture is a doctrine for mature believers only. A mature believer is eager for the Rapture to occur. He is so occupied with Christ that he looks for the Rapture.
17. Only the Trinity knows when the Rapture is going to occur.

D. The Power of Resurrection.

1. The power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead is the same power that resurrects each of us at the Rapture or resurrection of the Church.
2. Both the great power experiment of the Hypostatic Union and the great power experiment of the Church Age terminate in resurrections. Our Lord’s resurrection at the end of the great power experiment of the Hypostatic Union was the first resurrection in history. The Rapture of the Church is the first mass resurrection, when all Church Age believers receive their resurrection bodies.
3. Between the first two resurrections in history is the unique Church Age, the time when maximum divine power is available to every believer.

1 Corinthians 6:14 “Now God has not only raised the Lord, but He will raise us up through His power.” (NASB)

- a. The omnipotence of God the Father restored our Lord’s human spirit in heaven to His body in the grave and thereby became the agent in the resurrection of the humanity of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:24; Romans 6:4; 1 Corinthians 6:14; Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 2:12; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 1 Peter 1:21).
 - b. The omnipotence of the Holy Spirit restored our Lord’s human soul in Hades to His body in the tomb and thereby became the Agent in the resurrection of the humanity of Jesus Christ (Romans 1:4, 8:11; 1 Peter 3:18).
 - c. Because the great power experiment of the Hypostatic Union has been extended into the Church Age, the power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead is now available to every Church- Age believer.
4. After His physical death, our Lord’s human spirit went to the third heaven into the presence of God the Father. His human soul went to **ᾠδης (Hádēs)**: Hades, compartment of Paradise, His body went into the grave [**μνημεῖον (mnēmeíon)**]: “tomb.”
 5. Three days and nights later, the omnipotence of God the Father restored His human spirit to His body, the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit restored His soul to His body, and He received His resurrection body.
 6. So, the power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead is not only the same power that will raise us from the dead, but in addition, it is also the power made available to us today:

The omnipotence of God the Father is available to you through your very own portfolio of invisible assets.

The omnipotence of Jesus Christ is available to you, for He daily preserves and perpetuates human history.

The omnipotence of the Holy Spirit is available to you inside the prototype divine dynasphere.
 7. Because the great power experiment of the Hypostatic Union has been extended into the Church Age, the power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead is now available to you. But that requires post-salvation epistemological rehabilitation.

E. Scriptural Documentation.

Philippians 3:11 If by any means I might arrive with reference to the exit resurrection from the dead. (EXT)

1 John 3:2 Beloved, now we are the children of God, and what we will be He has not yet revealed. However, we know that if He should appear, we shall be exactly like Him because we shall see Him as He is.

1 John 3:3 And everyone who keeps on having this hope and confidence in Him purifies Himself [in the divine dynasphere] even as He is pure [ultimate sanctification in a resurrection body].” (NASB)

Titus 2:13 Looking for that blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus. (NASB)

1 Corinthians 6:14 Now God has not only resurrected the Lord, but He will raise us up through His power. (NASB)

1 Thessalonians 4:13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. (NASB)

- (1) The worst thing that can happen is to be ignorant of Bible doctrine.
- (2) The Thessalonian believers were very confused. They had learned about the imminency of the Rapture very early. Yet people were dying before the Rapture occurred, causing them to conclude that those who died wouldn't be included in the Rapture. Their ignorance led to distortion.
- (3) Being asleep is an analogy to the body sleeping in the grave, waiting for the resurrection.
- (4) The unbeliever has no hope, for after death there is nothing for him but the Lake of Fire.

1 Thessalonians 4:14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again [and we do], even so God [omnipotence of God the Father] will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.

v. 15 For this [doctrine] we say to you by the Word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord [Rapture], will not precede those who have fallen asleep.

v. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the ἀρχάγγελος (archángelos): archangel [Gabriel] and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.” (NASB)

- (1) In the angelic order of battle, two archangels, or army commanders of angels, are mentioned in the Bible: Michael and Gabriel.
- (2) Since Michael is called the “prince of Israel” in Daniel 10:21 and seems to be associated with Israel in Daniel 12:1 and Jude 9, this must be a reference to the voice of the other archangel, Gabriel.

- (3) Gabriel seems to be associated with the Church. He makes the announcement of the great power experiment of the Hypostatic Union in Luke 1:19 and 26.
- (4) There were two sources of command for military activity in the ancient world: the voice command and the trumpet command. The trumpet command assembles the dead in Christ at the Rapture.
- (5) The omnipotence of God the Father raises the dead in Christ by replacing their former bodies of corruption with resurrection bodies of incorruption:

1 Corinthians 15:53 For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.

v. 54 But when the perishable will have put on the imperishable, and the mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, “Death is swallowed up in victory.” (NASB) (see Isaiah 25:8a)

1 Thessalonians 4:17 Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them [**dead believers**] in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.

- (6) The omnipotence of the Holy Spirit provides a resurrection body for the living believers at the Rapture, replacing their bodies of mortality with resurrection bodies of immortality.

1 Thessalonians 4:18 Therefore, comfort [present active imperative of the verb, παρακαλέω (*parakalēō*)] **each other with λόγος (*lógos*) words** [or doctrines]. (NASB)

- (7) These doctrines are a source of comfort when you have lost a loved one. They are the source of blessing as you face the adversities of life and realize that there’s something far beyond this life, and that God has given you an eternal state in a permanent body that will never experience pain or deterioration in any possible way.

Revelation 3:11 ‘I will be coming soon; keep on grasping [**durative present active imperative of the verb, κρατέω (*kratéō*)**] what you have [**Bible doctrine**], so that no one may take away your crown. (NIV)

- a. The present active imperative of the verb *kratéō* tells you what you should be doing if the Rapture occurs. The word means: to seize, to grasp, to get possession of, and to become the master of something. You should be learning Bible doctrine consistently in preparation for the Rapture.

- b. Seizing, grasping, or becoming master of what you have is a reference to perception, cognition, and application of Bible doctrine on a consistent basis.
- c. This is how you prepare for the Rapture, as well as how you keep other people from distracting you from attaining your escrow blessings for eternity. Losers participate in the resurrection of the Church but lose their escrow blessings for eternity.

F. The Rapture and the Big Genuflect:

Philippians 2:9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,

v. 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

v. 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (NASB)

- (1) The entire royal family of God will identify Jesus Christ as the head of the family to the glory of the Father.
- (2) The Church in resurrection body makes a formal acknowledgment of the Father's function in the resurrection, ascension, and session of Christ.
- (3) The Big Genuflect occurs after the Rapture and before the Judgment Seat of Christ (1 Corinthians 4:5; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

G. Characteristics of the Rapture

- 1. Cognizance and application of the doctrine of the Rapture provides stability for the royal family in phase two of the plan of God:

1 Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord. (NASB)

- 2. The Rapture takes the sting out of death.

1 Corinthians 15:54 But when the perishable will have put on the imperishable, and the mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory.

v. 55 "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"

v. 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law;



1 Corinthians 15:57 but thanks be to God, Who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (NASB)

3. The Rapture removes hysteria and the hopelessness of bereavement:

1 Thessalonians 4:13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope.

v. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.

4. The Rapture is a source of comfort in time of bereavement:

1 Thessalonians 4:15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.

v. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

v. 17 Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, so we shall always be with the Lord.

v. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words. (NASB)

Philippians 1:6 For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

H. The Rapture is a part of ultimate sanctification:

1. The royal family of God is purified at the Rapture.
2. Human good and evil are burned and the old sin nature is removed.

I. The Rapture is the basis for confidence.

1. The metabolization of doctrine and resultant growth to maturity results in occupation with Christ, whereby the believer waits with keen anticipation for the Rapture: Titus 2:13; Philippians 1:6; 1 Peter 1:3.
2. The Rapture is categorized under three kinds of hope.
 - a. Living hope: ζάω ἐλπίς (*záō elpís*): 1 Peter 1:3
 - b. Blessed hope: μακάριος ἐλπίς (*makários elpís*): Titus 2:13.
 - c. Purifying hope: ἀγνίζω ἐλπίς (*hagnízō elpís*): 1 John 3:3.

J. Chronology of the Rapture.

1. The Rapture takes place, 1 Corinthians 15:51–58; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18.
2. The Big Genuflect occurs: “every knee shall bow”: Philippians 2:10.



3. The Judgment Seat of Christ, 2 Corinthians 5:10, at which believers appear.
4. The Bride returns with Christ at the Second Advent, 1 Thessalonians 3:13.
5. The manifestation of the Bride, Romans 8:19; Colossians 3:4.
6. Operation Footstool, Psalm 110:1; Colossians 2:15; 1 Corinthians 15:24–25.
7. The Coronation of Christ, Revelation 19:6.
8. The Wedding Supper of the Lamb, Revelation 19:7–9, “the bride makes herself ready.”
9. The purpose of the Rapture is to get the royal family of God prepared for the Second Advent and the Wedding Supper.

K. The Rapture and Reward:

Philippians 2:16 Be concentrating on the Word of Life [Bible doctrine] in order that I may have a basis for boasting with reference to the day of Christ [Rapture], for the purpose that I have not run without profit or in vain, nor worked hard for no purpose. (EXT)

Paul wants to have esprit de corps on the day of Christ as he sees his congregation rewarded. This esprit, or “boasting,” comes from the rewards that the royal family of God receive.

L. The Rapture and the Two Resurrections.

1. The Rapture is part of the first resurrection, which has four parts:
 - a. The resurrection of Christ at the First Advent.
 - b. The resurrection of the Church or royal family of God at the Rapture.
 - c. The resurrection of all Old Testament believers and Tribulational martyrs at the Second Advent.
 - d. The resurrection of Millennial believers.
2. Next on the prophetic agenda is the Doctrine of the Tribulation.

DOCTRINE OF THE TRIBULATION

The Tribulation is a seven-year period which follows the Church Age and whose population initially consists of unbelievers only. With all establishment and doctrinal viewpoint removed from the souls of mankind, absolute chaos breaks out while the fallen angels’ influence dominates the world. The Tribulation is initially characterized by complete chaos in the souls of all Homo sapiens.

A summary of this seven-year dispensation is described by the noun, **θλίψις** (*thlipsis*): “Tribulation,” which is defined as follows:

- (1) “Distress and suffering resulting from oppression or persecution.”⁴
- (2) “A state of affliction or trial; great misery or distress, as from oppression.”

⁴ Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, eleventh ed. (Springfield: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2014).

