

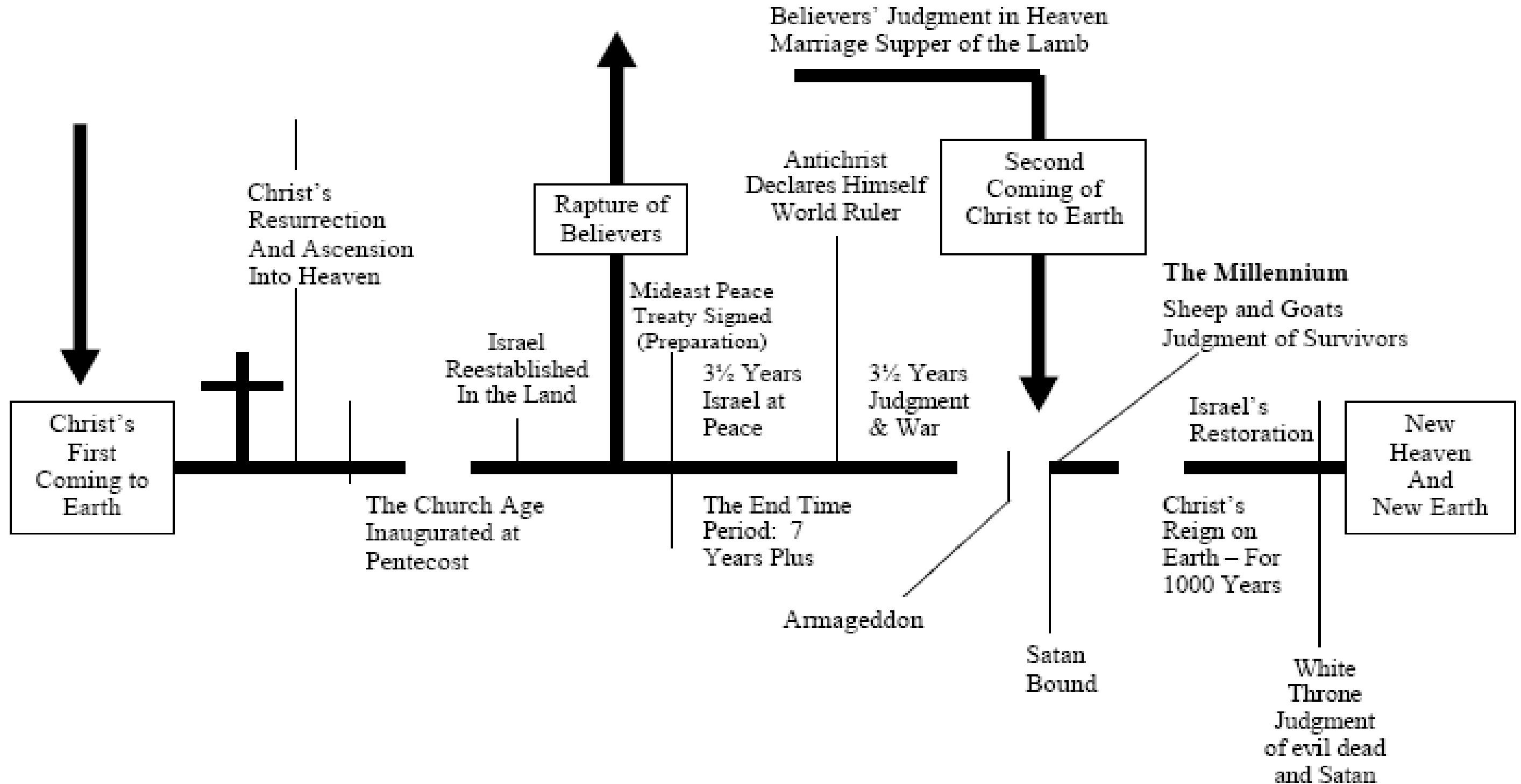
Message Title

A Rapture You Can't Miss (1Thess. 4:13-18)

A Judgment You Must Face (2 Cor. 5:10)

A Supper You Will Want to Attend (Rev. 19:1-10)

Order of Events of Bible Prophecy According to the Pretribulational/Premillennial Understanding



I. The Rapture is an Event of Comfort.

1 Thess. 4:13-18; cf. 1 Cor. 15:50-58

The Rapture: The phrase comes from the Greek *harpazo* and the Latin *raptus* meaning “to catch up” or “snatch away.” It refers to the time when believers, both dead and living, will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. The bodies of the dead in Christ will be united with their souls, with all believers receiving their glorified bodies. We comfort each other with the promise that we will always be with the Lord. Primary texts are 1 Corinthians 15:50-58 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

*The truth of the rapture is a non-negotiable tenet of the faith. The timing of the rapture is not. One's position concerning the time of the rapture should not be a test of fellowship. It can, however, be the occasion for healthy and spirited discussion and debate conducted in a manner that honors Christ.

Five Views on the Time of the Rapture

1. Post-Tribulation – The rapture occurs after the tribulation and is synonymous with the second coming of Jesus.
2. Mid-Tribulation – The rapture occurs during the tribulation at the halfway point of the seven year period (Daniel's 70th Week/The time of Jacob's trouble).
3. Pre-Tribulation – The rapture of believers occurs before the beginning of the seven year tribulation.

Five Views on the Time of the Rapture

4. Partial Rapture – Believers will be raptured at different times just before and during the tribulation based upon their faithfulness to Christ.
5. Pre-Wrath Rapture – The rapture occurs after the midpoint of the seven year tribulation but before the “day of God’s wrath” which is the more terrible time of God’s judgment.

Why I Believe in a Pretribulation Rapture

1. The natural chronological reading of 1 Thess. 4:13-5:11 which presents the rapture before the “Day of the Lord.”
2. 1 Thess. 5:9 teaches that believers are not destined for wrath. The context of that promise is the wrath of the “Day of the Lord.”
3. The “restrainer” of sin who is taken out in 2 Thess. 2:6-7 is best understood to refer to the restraining ministry of the Holy Spirit as embodied in His presence in the Church. Point of clarification: While the Spirit’s restraining work is removed, His convicting work will continue as untold numbers of persons will come to Christ during the seven year tribulation.

Why I Believe in a Pretribulation Rapture

4. Revelation 3:10 promises that the church will be “kept from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world.”
5. Israel, the people with whom God made an eternal covenant, becomes prominent and the focal point of much that occurs at the end of the age (Rom. 11; Rev. 7).
6. *The doctrine of imminency is the crucial and decisive argument. Titus 2:13 admonishes us to look for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of the Savior , not for signs of the tribulation, antichrist or false prophet.
7. There are numerous differences between the rapture in the clouds and the second coming to earth that are consistent with a pretribulation understanding of the rapture event.

The Rapture and Second Coming Compared

Phase One (The Rapture)	Phase Two (The Second Coming)
Christ comes to receive His church in the air.	Christ returns with his bride and angels to the earth.
The seven year tribulation begins shortly after the rapture of the church.	The millennial kingdom (1000 years) of Christ is established after the second coming.
The event is imminent; it could happen at any time.	Numerous signs precede this event (cf. Rev. 6-19).
This is a message of comfort for believers.	This is a message of judgment (and warning) for unbelievers.
The church is of primary importance.	Israel is of primary importance.

The Rapture and Second Coming Compared

Phase One (The Rapture)	Phase Two (The Second Coming)
The rapture is a mystery.	The second coming is predicted in both the Old and New Testaments.
The judgment seat of Christ for believers occurs (Rom. 14:10; 1 Cor. 3:10-15; 2 Cor. 5:10).	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) The sheep and goats judgment occurs (Matt. 25: 31-46)2) Antichrist and the world are judged (Rev. 19:11-21).
Only believers are affected.	All people are affected.
The church is taken into the Lord's presence in heaven.	All believers are brought into the millennial kingdom to reign with Christ on earth.

**II. The Judgment Seat of Christ is an
Accounting We Must Give to Our Savior.**

Rom. 14:10; 1 Cor. 3:10-15; 2 Cor. 5:10

The Judgment Seat of Christ: The term comes from the Greek word bema. It is an accounting given by believers for their works and faithfulness during their Christian life. The quality and character of works will be tested (even to heart motivation). This is not a judgment of salvation but one of service. It stands in stark contrast to the “Great White Throne” judgment of unbelievers revealed in Rev. 20:11-15. The time of the judgment is uncertain, though it must take place after the rapture and before the Second Coming

- Actions are evaluated
- Motivations are revealed

**A Comparison of The “Judgment Seat of Christ”
and The “Great White Throne Judgment”**

Issue	Judgment Seat of Christ “Bema” Seat Judgment	Great White Throne Judgment
Persons	Believers Only	Unbelievers Only
Scripture	Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 3:10-15 2 Corinthians 5:10	Revelation 20:11-15
Basis	Faithfulness in Christ and Resultant Good Works (Even to Our Motivations)	Rejection of Christ and Thus One’s Own Righteousness
Time	Between Rapture and Second Coming, or at the Second Coming	End of Millennium
Results	Rewards or Loss of Rewards	Eternity in the “Lake of Fire” (Hell)

**III. The Marriage Supper of the Lamb is a
Day of Glorious Celebration.**

Rev. 19:1-10

Points of Theological Significance

1. The bride of Rev. 19:1-10 stands in stark contrast to the whore of Rev. 17-18.
2. The “Marriage Supper of the Lamb” of Rev. 19:7-10 stands in stark contrast to the “Great Supper of God” (“the bird feast”) of Rev. 19:17-21.
3. The chronology of Rev. 19:1-20:15 supports the pretribulation view of the rapture.

Marriage Supper of
Believers in Heaven
19:1-10

Second
Coming
19:11-21

Millennium
20:1-6

Final
Rebellion
20:7-10

White Throne
Judgment
20:11-15

Eternal
State
21-22

Points of Theological Significance

4. The image of marriage symbolizing the relationship of God and His people appears several times in the Bible (Isaiah 54:5-7; Hosea 2:19; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:25-27).

*There were three distinct stages to a Jewish Marriage:

- 1) Betrothal took place from God's perspective in eternity past/from ours at the time of conversion.
- 2) Procession to get the bride – the rapture (1 Thess. 4:13-18).
- 3) Wedding Feast/Celebration – 3 Views: a) 7 years in heaven during the tribulation or b) the millennial kingdom or c) the eternal state.

*My view: The feast begins at the rapture and extends through the 1000 year reign. Note that it says, “The Marriage of the Lamb has come.”