

The Book of Revelation

THRONE ROOM OF GOD
IN HEAVEN

Revelation 4:1 – 5:14

Nano Church
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Outline

- Introduction to Revelation 4 and 5
- Review of interpretive methods
 - Dispensational premillennialism (futurist)
 - Progressive parallelism (idealist/eclectic)
- The Rapture
 - What is it?
 - When will it occur?
- Revelation 4
- Revelation 5

Revelation 4:1-2

¹ After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.” ² At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne.

- The vision of the throne room of God is to give all believers, in all times and in places, assurance that the holy, omnipotent, and omniscient God is indeed in control of history.
- It gives us a glimpse of what it means to truly worship and glorify God.

Structure of Revelation

Chaps. 1-3 Letters to seven churches	Chaps. 4-19 Seals, trumpets, witnesses, woman and dragon, beasts, bowls, harlot, Armageddon	20:1-6 Millennium	20:7-22:5 Dragon destroyed, resurrection, judgment, new heaven and earth
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Futurist view (Dispensational Premillennialism)



The Rapture

- The Rapture of the church, which is the first phase of Christ's second coming, is the intersection of two events: the resurrection of the dead, specifically only believers, and the transformation of living believers.
- They will all immediately be together in Jesus' glorious presence, and he will escort them to heaven to live with him forever.



1 Thessalonians 4:13-17

¹³ But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.

¹⁴ For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁵ For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.

¹⁶ For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will be **caught up** together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.

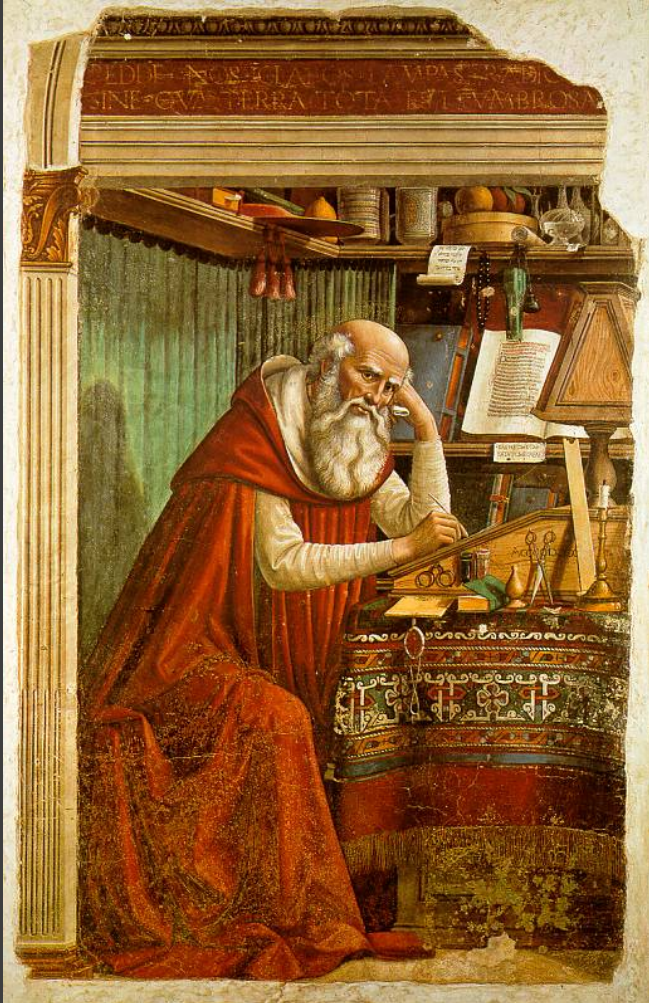
John 14:1-3

¹ “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ² In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.”

1 Corinthians 15:50-53

⁵⁰ I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹ Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.

Origin of the term “Rapture”



- In Jerome's Latin translation of the Greek New Testament, he used a form of the Latin word *rapio* for “caught up” in 1 Thess. 4:17.
- The Latin verb *rapio* means “to seize, snatch, or seize away.”
- Examples of the use of the term “Rapture” can be found as early as the 17th century.
- It came into widespread use in the dispensational premillennial teaching of J. N. Darby.

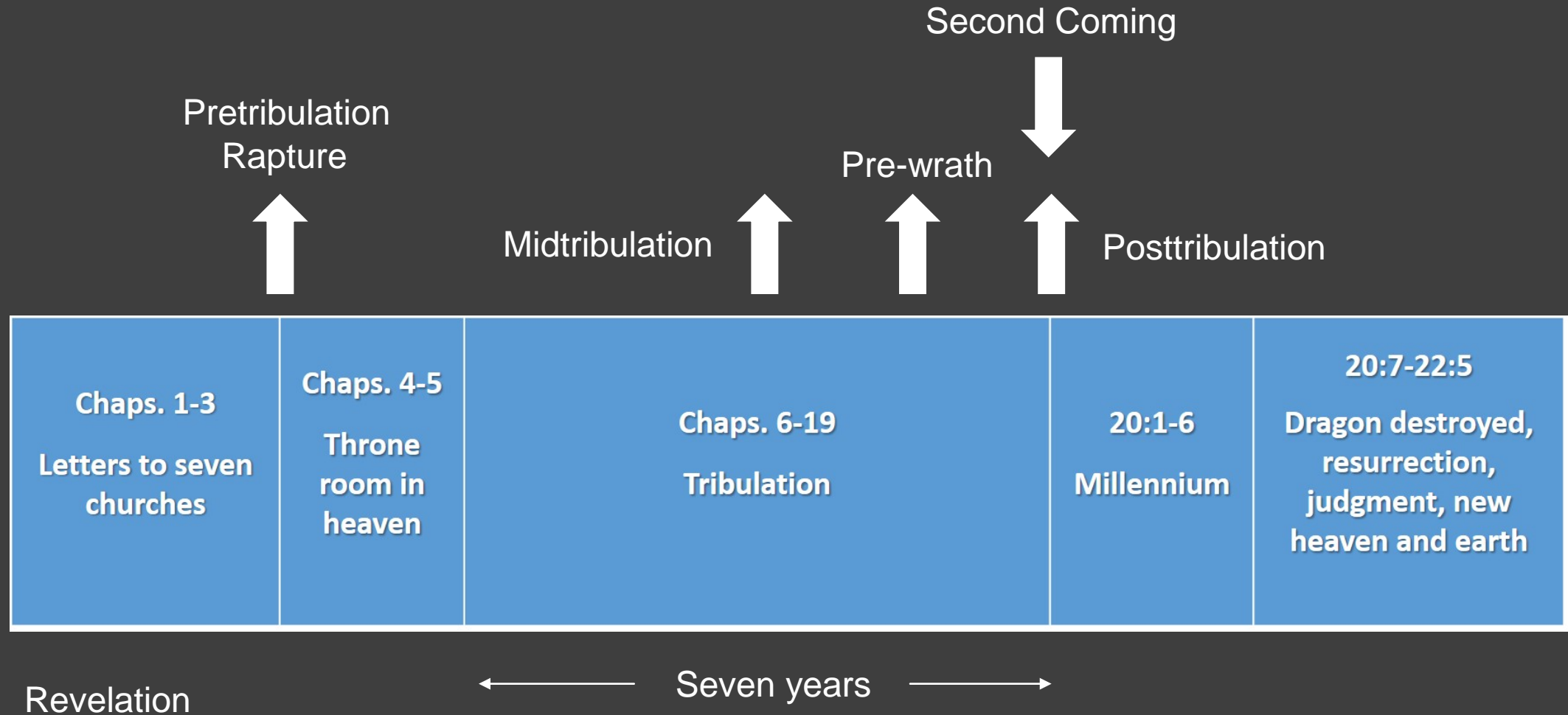
The timing of the Rapture

- Most Christians agree that the Rapture will occur, but not when it will occur.
- The key issue is this: will the church go through any or all of the seven-year Tribulation before the Rapture occurs?
- Dispensational premillennialism teaches that the Rapture will occur prior to the start of the Tribulation. This is the Pretribulation view.
- There are four other views held by premillennialists – Midtribulation, Pre-wrath, Posttribulation, and Partial Rapture.

The Tribulation

- The Tribulation is a special time of judgment from God that will come upon the entire world, will be unprecedented in its affliction, and will be culminated by the personal return of Jesus Christ to earth.
- The Tribulation is the fulfillment of the seventieth week (of years) of Daniel 9:24-27 and thus will last seven years.
- The judgments will increase in intensity so that the second half of this time period is often called The Great Tribulation.
- It will be used to discipline Israel for its rebellion and rejection of Jesus as Messiah, bringing the nation to faith in Christ and preparing it for restoration and regathering in the millennium.
- In general, it will be a judgment against all mankind for its rebellion.

Premillennial views on timing of the Rapture



Reasons in support of a pretribulation rapture

- Revelation 4-18 makes no mention of the church on earth.
- Rev. 3:10 - “Because you have kept my word about patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth.”
- 1 Thess. 1:9-10 - “For they themselves report . . . how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.”
- 1 Thess. 5:2-9 – “For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. . . . For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ”

Progressive Parallelism view

Revelation

Chaps. 1-3 Letters to seven churches	Chaps. 4-19 Seals, trumpets, witnesses, woman and dragon, beasts, harlot, Armageddon 20:1-6 Millennium	20:7-22:5 Dragon destroyed, resurrection of all, judgment, all things new
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- The Book of Revelation consists of a series of parallel visions in which God expresses the same truths in different ways.
- The millennium is symbolic. It refers to the reign of Christ between his first and second advents.
- The Rapture is part of the Second Coming of Christ and not a separate event.

Revelation 4:3-7

³ And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald.

⁴ Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads. ⁵ From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God, ⁶ and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal.

And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: ⁷ the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight.

Throne room in heaven



Key images in Revelation 4:1-7

- **throne** – occurs 17 times in Rev. 4-5 and 38 times overall in the book. This is a symbol of God's absolute sovereignty over history.
- **precious stones** - intensify the light around the throne by reflecting the unapproachable brightness or glory surrounding God himself.
- **rainbow** - express the grace of God as in the days of Noah. In Ezek. 1:11, it speaks of the radiance of the glory of God.
- **24 elders** – several possibilities for whom they represent
 - the completed body of Christ, Jewish and Gentile believers in the church (Walvoord)
 - a council of the Lord's heavenly servants (Johnson)
 - angelic beings representing the church as a whole, both OT and NT (Beale)

Key images in Revelation 4:1-7 (concluded)

- **thunder and lightning** – recalls the giving of the law to Moses and reflects God's holiness. Associated with three later judgments in Revelation.
- **seven torches** burning which are the seven spirits of God – Holy Spirit
- **four living creatures**
 - Similar to cherubim in Ezekiel and seraphim in Isaiah.
 - Exalted order of angelic beings around the heavenly throne.
 - They have two roles – continual worship in heaven and the inauguration of the judgments on mankind (Rev. 6:1-8) and further mediation of the judgments (15:7)
 - Multitude of eyes represents the omniscience of God.

Revelation 4:8-11

⁸ And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say,

“Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty
who was and is and is to come!”

⁹ And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, ¹⁰ the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

¹¹ “Worthy are you, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things
and by your will they existed and were created.”

Worship in Revelation 4:8-11

- This section has the first two of five expressions of praise in Rev. 4-5.
- All are poetic in form although only the central one is called a “song” and accompanied by harps (Rev. 5:8-9).
- The first two offer praise to God the Father, the next two are addressed to Christ, and the last one is offered to both.
- The four living creatures praise God for his holiness, omnipotence, and eternity, ascribing to him glory and honor and thanks.
- The elders fall down before God and cast down their crowns, acknowledging that all authority derives from him, belongs to him, and returns to him.

Revelation 5:1-4

¹ Then I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals. ² And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?” ³ And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it, ⁴ and I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it.

The scroll with seven seals

- It represents the plan of God for judgment and final redemption as the following chapters will show.
- It is written on both sides, indicating the completeness of God's plan.
- Daniel 12 and Isaiah 29 refer to sealed books which conceal divine revelation and are concerned with judgment.
- In the ancient world, documents were sealed with wax impressed with the author's insignia to keep the contents secret and free from tampering until an authoritative person broke the seals, enabling its contents to be read.
- For this scroll, breaking involves not only revealing the plan but also implementing it.
- John wept as it appeared that there was no one worthy to open the seals.

Revelation 5:5-7

⁵ And one of the elders said to me, “Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.”

⁶ And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. ⁷ And he went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who was seated on the throne.

The Lion who is the Lamb

- Lion of the tribe of Judah - When Israel (Jacob) bestowed a final blessing on his sons, he compared Judah with a lion and foresaw a perpetual royal dynasty from Judah's line (Gen. 49:8-12).
- Root of David – an allusion to Isa. 11:1-10 which looks forward to an ideal king of the line of David who will judge with righteousness and usher in an age of peace.
- When John turns to look, he sees “a Lamb, standing as if it had been slain.”
- The seven horns portray his supreme power and the seven eyes speak of his omniscience.
- The seven eyes also speak of the Holy Spirit, who carries out the plan of God on the earth.

Revelation 5:8-10

⁸ And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

⁹ And they sang a new song, saying,

“Worthy are you to take the scroll
and to open its seals,
for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed
people for God from every tribe and language and people
and nation,

¹⁰ and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God,
and they shall reign on the earth.”

Revelation 5:11-12

¹¹ Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, ¹² saying with a loud voice,

“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain,
to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might
and honor and glory and blessing!”

Revelation 5:13-14

¹³ And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying,

“To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb
be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!”

¹⁴ And the four living creatures said, “Amen!” and the elders fell down and worshiped.

Worship in Revelation 5:8-14

- Prayers of the saints – call for the judgment of God on evildoers and his deliverance of the righteous (Rev. 6:9-11 and Rev. 8:3-5).
- The worthiness of the Lamb is ascribed to his great act of redemption.
- His sacrificial death was the means whereby he purchased a people for God from every tribe, people, language, and nation.
- The saints will reign with Christ in a new earth.
- A very large number of angels join in for the fourth hymn.
- For the fifth hymn, every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth join in to praise both the Father and the Son.

Concluding comments

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Discussion

