

FIG TREE WATCHERS

*Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender
and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. Even so,
when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door.*

Matthew 24:32-33



Figtreewatchers Podcast Episode 145: End Times Chronology - The Rapture, Bema, and Gap

July 9th, 2023

These show notes were created and edited by Ayo Shosanya and Stephan Caraway of Figtreewatchers

Episode Summary: In this episode we finally begin working through our timeline of events starting with the rapture of the church, the judgment seat of Christ (also known as Bema judgment), and the gap of time between the rapture and the tribulation.

Scan the QR code below to go to the podcast episode.



The Rapture & Gap

What is the Rapture?

In an article written by Dr. Richard Mayhue, a Dean at Master's Seminary, he defines it in this manner:

"The English noun/verb "rapture" comes from the Latin noun raptura/verb rapio which refers to the Greek word $\delta\beta\upsilon\tau$ (harpazō) that is used 14 times in the NT. The basic idea of the word is "to remove suddenly or snatch away." It is used by the NT in reference to stealing/plundering (Matt 11:12; 12:29; 13:19; John 10:12, 28, 29) and removing (John 6:15; Acts 8:39; 23:10; Jude 23).

There is a third use, which focuses on being caught up to heaven. It is used of Paul's third heaven experience (2 Cor 12:2, 4) and Christ's ascension to heaven (Rev 12:5). Obviously, harpazÇ is the perfect word to describe God suddenly taking up the church from earth to heaven as the first part of Christ's second coming. However, the term itself contains no hint of the rapture's time in relationship to Daniel's seventieth week."

The rapture view is plainly seen in scripture but the blindness to it, seems to always be followed by hatred and name-calling by those who deny the truth of scripture. Love should always be at the center of our biblical faith in Jesus. We always need to remember that we are ambassadors of Reconciliation, not ambassadors of strife.

Where does the rapture exist in scripture?

- "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know." Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:1-6 NKJV)
- "But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. 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 by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words." (I Thessalonians 4:13-18 NKJV)
- "Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (I Corinthians 15:51-52 NKJV)
- "If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory." (Colossians 3:1-4 NKJV)
- "Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown." (Revelation 3:10-11 NKJV)
- "But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him." (I Thessalonians 5:8-10 NKJV)

Judgment seat of Christ

What is the judgment seat of Christ?

- We are not judged unto condemnation. What will be judged are the works we did (or lack there of) in this life. Based on what we've done, good or bad, we will either gain or lose rewards (2 Corinthians 5:10).
- Although scripture doesn't divulge every detail concerning the rewards the Lord may give to us, it does speak on the reality of 5 crowns a believer may attain:
 - The Imperishable Crown (1 Corinthians 9:24-25)
 - The Crown of Rejoicing (1 Thessalonians 2:19)
 - The Crown of Righteousness (2 Timothy 4:8)
 - The Crown of Glory (1 Peter 5:2-5)
 - The Crown of Life (James 1:12)

Gap between rapture and the tribulation

Many Christians believe that the rapture starts the tribulation period but that's simply not the case.

What starts the tribulation is the confirmation, by the Anti-Christ, of the false covenant in Daniel 9:27 for a period of 7 years, but we'll break that down later.

Different theories on the gap

It could be anywhere from a few days, to weeks, months, or even a few years. But there's another view that states that the gap could actually be several decades!

Events that possibly occur during the gap

Post-rapture deception

We believe it's possible that the world's leaders essentially say all those missing people were abducted.

If you think this is a stretch here are some quotes from those in the New Age movement that claim to be "channelers" and talk about a future event where millions of people disappear from the earth.

- "The Great Evacuation will come upon the world very suddenly. The flash of emergency events will be as a lightning that flashes in the sky. So suddenly and so quick in its happening that it is

over almost before you are aware of its presence..." (Project World Evacuation by Channeler Thelma Terrell)

- "There is method and great organization in a detailed plan already near completion for the purpose of removing souls from this planet, in the event of catastrophic events making a rescue necessary..." (Project World Evacuation by Channeler Thelma Terrell)
- "...Many of the New Age workers and instructors who feel that they will be taken will not be taken right away, but left behind to help mankind survive through the cataclysmic period. That is their mission." (Psychic and UFO Revelations in the Last Days by Timothy Green Beckley)

Tribulation Is Coming, But You Don't Have To Go Through It..., by Olivier Melnick: *"In the beginning, things might appear to be under control on planet Earth. It is very likely that News and government agencies will hide the sudden disappearance of millions of people behind the cloak of alien abduction. "*

Utter Chaos

After millions of people vanish from the face of the earth we could expect many ramifications:

- Economic and societal collapse
- Increase in lawlessness and violence

Gog & Magog War in Ezekiel 38

It's possible that the Gog & Magog war could happen during this time.

Expansion of Israel

10 brief things that need to change place (*The Now Prophecies*, p 10, by Bill Salus)

Rebuilding of Babylon

Babylon City needs to be built (Zechariah 5:5-11). It's likely that the rebuilding of Babylon could begin during this time, however, scripture isn't clear on that.

Sources

1. [Why a Pretribulational Rapture?](#) by Richard Mayhue, The Master's Seminary
2. [Tribulation Is Coming, But You Don't Have To Go Through It...](#) by Olivier Melnick, Harbingers Daily

3. The Now Prophecies, p 10, by Bill Salus