

Post-Tribulation Rapture, Proved In Four Easy Steps

In Revelation, end time events are described, in order, in seven consecutive sections of a figurative, rolled-up scroll (Revelation 5). The sections begin - and are separated - by seals. As each seal is opened, the following section can be unrolled and read, and those events occur. The final, seventh seal is comprised of seven consecutive (figurative) trumpet soundings (Revelation 8:1 through 11:15).

We should define our terms - tribulation, resurrection and rapture - before we go any further.

Tribulation: a time so bad that unless it were cut short, no one would survive it. Jesus described it in Matthew 24:21,22:

"For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

(Opinion: The tribulation may be wartime use of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction.)

Resurrection and rapture: The time when the "dead in Christ" will rise from their graves having immortal, spiritual bodies. At the same time those in Christ who "are alive and remain" will receive immortal, spiritual bodies. Then they, together with the resurrected, will be raptured: they will all be "caught up" to meet Christ "in the air." We'll look at scriptures about this shortly.

Now with four simple steps we can determine whether the rapture takes place before, or during, or after the tribulation.

1. According to Matthew 24:29 the sun is darkened "immediately after" the tribulation:

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken"

2. According to Revelation 6:12 the sun is darkened at the opening of the sixth seal.

"And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places."

(Revelation 6:12-14)

So we know that the tribulation is over at the opening of the sixth seal, when the sun is darkened.

3. The resurrection and rapture take place "at the last trump" (1 Corinthians 15:52) . . . at the seventh of the seven trumpet soundings that comprise the seventh seal. The apostle Paul describes this in 1 Corinthians 15:50-54:

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

Behold, I shew 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 trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

(1 Corinthians 15:50-54)

And here is another account, in 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17:

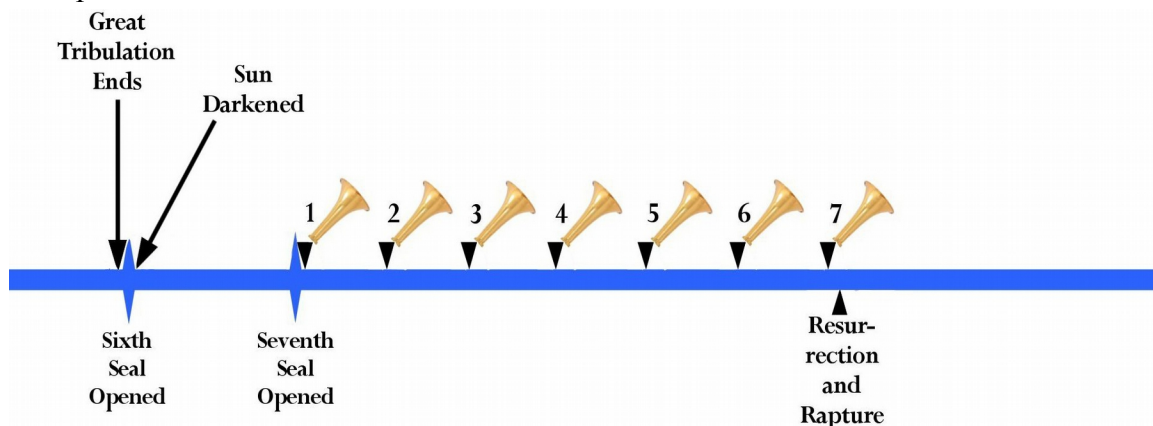
"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

(1 Thessalonians 4:16,17)

4. "Immediately after" the tribulation, the sixth-seal darkening of the sun and moon take place, followed by all the remaining events of the sixth seal (Revelation 6:13 through 7:17). And after that, the first six trumpets of the seventh seal (Revelation 8:1 through 11:14) must take place. At the sounding of the "last trump," the seventh trumpet (Revelation 11:15), the resurrection and rapture take place. Obviously, then, the resurrection and rapture are post-tribulation.

Here is a time line, showing the opening of the sixth and seventh seals, the seven trumpet soundings, the end of the tribulation, the darkening of the sun and the resurrection and rapture



There is something else that uniquely ties Matthew 24:29 and Revelation 6 together — something that happens right after the darkening and the stars falling. Here's the next verse in Matthew:

"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

(Matthew 24:30)

Now see the parallel with the next few verses following Revelation 6:12–14:

"And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;
And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:
For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"

(Revelation 6:15–17)

Why would unbelievers from every walk of life all over the world suddenly say "hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb"? It's quite simple: they are literally seeing "the sign of the Son of man in heaven [the sky] . . . the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

Jesus described that "sign" here in Matthew 26:64:

"Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."

The world literally sees the sign of Him "sitting on the right hand of power" . . . "him that sitteth on the throne" . . . "coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

There's a paradigm shift: all of a sudden God becomes very real to them because of what they literally see, and an "innumerable multitude" come to repentance, as described in Revelation chapter 7, during the remainder of the sixth seal.

Of course, many will continue to insist on a pre-tribulation rapture. Some will correctly point out that the sun dims at two other points in Revelation, other than at the opening of the sixth seal. But it turns out that *those other two dimmings/darkenings are also before the seventh trumpet sounds*. So no matter which of the three dimmings/darkenings we link with the end of the tribulation, the tribulation ends before the seventh trumpet sounds and the resurrection and rapture occur.

Those two other darkening or dimmings of the sun are in the seventh seal, at the sounding of the fourth and fifth trumpets. They are described in Revelation 8:12 and in Revelation 9:2 if you want to look them up. Neither of them includes the appearance of the sign of Jesus - "him that sitteth on the throne" - as do Matthew 24:30 and Revelation 6:15-

17. Revelation 6:12–17 is clearly the best passage to tie to the end of the tribulation.

And just for the record, Revelation has no dimming/darkening of the sun at any time *after* the darkening during the fifth trumpet. The end of the tribulation and the darkening of the sun come before the seventh trumpet rapture. The rapture is post-tribulation.

We have yet another indication that the Revelation 6:12-17 darkening of the sun is the darkening of the sun "immediately after" the tribulation. An angel says the following while describing the "innumerable multitude" that come to repentance after seeing "him that sitteth on the throne":

"These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." (Revelation 7:14)

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The tribulation, the reign of the beast and the wrath of God are often confused with one another. They are three different, separate events. The rapture occurs well after the end of the tribulation, and also after three and a half years of the beast making "war" on the saints (Daniel 7:21,25; Revelation 13:7) . . . but before the wrath of God is poured out on those who had "the mark of the beast" (Revelation 16:1,2).

We'll look at the reign of the beast and the wrath of God in detail.

The first mention of the beast in Revelation is during the sixth trumpet of the seventh seal . . . after the tribulation had ended. At that time the beast kills the "two witnesses." The testimony of the two witnesses had been like fire proceeding from their mouths: their testimony had been "devouring" (destroying the credibility) of those who challenged them (Revelation 11:5). Then comes the beast:

"And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified."

(Revelation 11:7,8)

The beast reigns supreme for 42 months, and makes war on the saints:

"And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.

And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations."

(Revelation 13:5–7)

In Daniel 7 the beast is called the "little horn" and makes war on the saints for "a time and times and the dividing of time" . . . for three and a half years, the same as 42 months:

"I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints,

and prevailed against them"

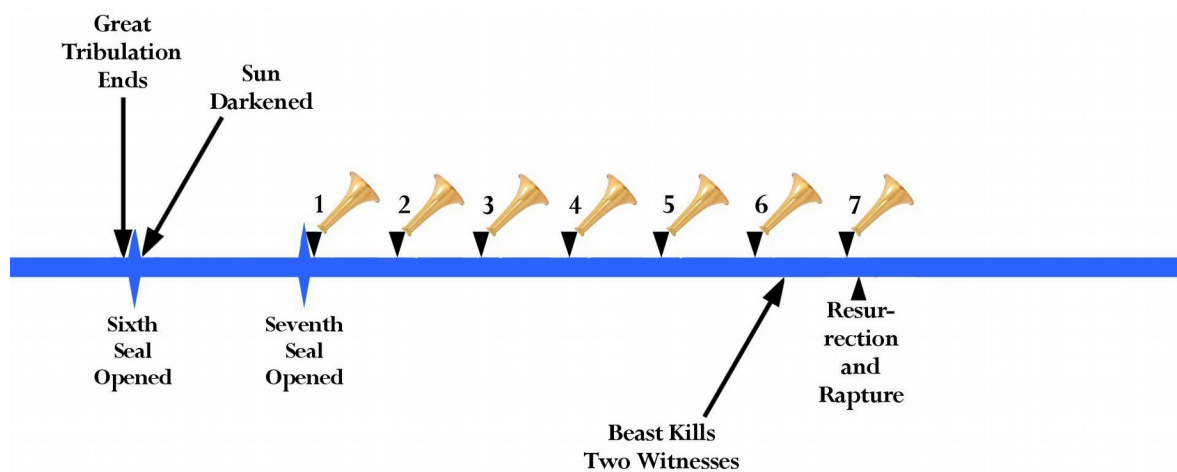
(Daniel 7:21)

"And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time."

(Daniel 7:25)

Given that the beast/little horn makes war on the saints, it becomes obvious they have not yet been raptured. However they will be raptured "at the last trump": the sounding of the seventh trumpet.

We'll add the beast killing the two witnesses to the timeline:



What happens to the beast? After the rapture, the wrath of God is poured out on all who had the mark of the beast:

"And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.

And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image."

(Revelation 16:1,2)

Later during the wrath of God the beast gathers armies at a place called Armageddon (not far from Jerusalem) in preparation for "the battle of that great day of God Almighty" (Revelation 16:14). Apparently they gather to prevent Jesus and His resurrected immortal saints from arriving at Jerusalem to establish the Kingdom of God, perhaps claiming that the returning Jesus is the anti-Christ.

The saints, of course, will not suffer God's wrath. They will have been raptured just before the wrath of God is poured out. What will they be doing with Jesus while the wrath of God is poured out? It appears they will be enjoying "the marriage supper of the Lamb"—the wedding feast of Jesus and His church.

The marriage supper is mentioned only once in Revelation, just before Jesus comes to

Jerusalem with His resurrected, immortal saints:

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

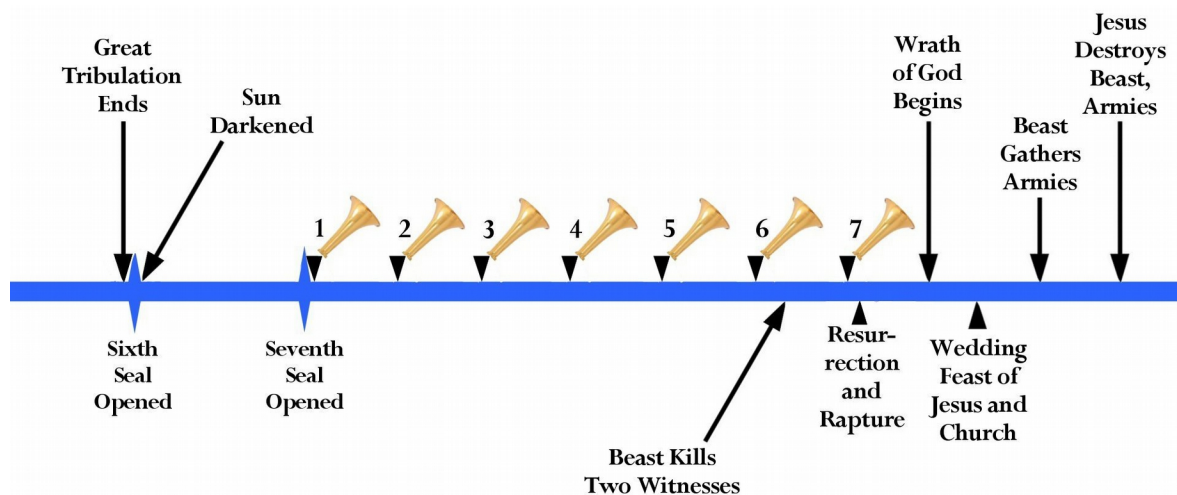
And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God."

(Revelation 19:7-9).

Then Jesus, with His saints, comes to Jerusalem and destroys the beast and his armies. This is described in Revelation 19:11-21 and other passages).

Let's add these to the timeline:



Jesus will establish the Kingdom of God here on earth, and His resurrected immortal saints will rule with Him a thousand years:

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."

(Daniel 2:44)

"And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

(Daniel 7:14)

"And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation

shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

(Isaiah 2:4)

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

(Revelation 20:6)

