

The Rapture

Lane Casteix

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Part 1

A hotly debated topic among Christians is the doctrine of the Rapture. While the word “rapture” is defined as the act of being transported or being rapt, meaning to be completely fascinated with what one is seeing or hearing, in the context of this study, Rapture refers to God's act of calling out all believers of the Church Age, both living and dead, and their removal from Earth to Heaven before the Tribulation begins. This is the premise we will develop and support with Scripture.

Two passages truly stand out as rapture passages. One is found in 1 Thessalonians.

1 Thessalonians 4:13 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. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.

The context of the 1 Thessalonians passage is that the Thessalonian believers were under heavy persecution (1 Thessalonians 3:7), and they had some misunderstandings about the return of Christ. Because of their persecution, some believed they were already in the Tribulation. Since Paul had taught that the Rapture would happen before the Tribulation, they were worried that they might have missed it. Paul's comments in 1 Thessalonians 4 were meant to reassure them that they had not missed the Rapture. He reminds them that Jesus died and rose again, and He will

bring with Him those “who have fallen asleep” (v. 15). Paul then says in verse 16 that the Lord will “descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God,”

Not only do we have this “cry of command” (v. 16), but we also have the “voice of the archangel and the sound of the trumpet.” That’s quite a bit of noise. Even the dead hear it and rise from the graves (v. 16). However, since it’s a command from God, which must be obeyed, only those called can hear it; otherwise, others would come too.

Then those who are alive will likewise be “caught up” to join the dead in Christ and the Lord Himself, “and so we will always be with the Lord” (v. 17).

It has been claimed by many that the term “rapture” does not appear in Scripture. It is true that “rapture” does not appear in English-translated Bibles. Since the original texts are in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, the word doesn’t appear there either. However, it does appear in Latin translations of the Bible as the Latin word *rapturo*. The Latin Vulgate actually used a different form of the same verb, *rapiemur* instead of *rapturo*. The Latin translators chose these words to translate the Greek word *harpazo*, found in the Greek texts like 1 Thessalonians 4:17.

1 Thessalonians 4:17 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.

The term “caught up” in verse 17 is the Greek word *harpazo*, which means to seize or to snatch out or away. It is the Greek word that the Latin translations render as *rapturo*, which is where we get the term “rapture.” So, you see, “rapture” does appear in the Bible, but only if you are reading a Latin translation of the Bible.

The dead rise first (v. 16), followed by “we who are alive,” and everyone is *harpazoed* “together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.” And we will always be with Him forever and ever (v. 17).

First Corinthians also has a passage about this event.

1 Corinthians 15:50 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.

Here, we learn more details concerning this *harpazo* event we call the Rapture. We are told that we must exchange our corruptible bodies for incorruptible resurrection bodies (v. 50). The phrase “we shall not all sleep” refers to physical death. Some will be taken from the graves (resurrected), as shown in verse 51 and in 1 Thessalonians 4:16. The others who “will not all sleep” (those believers alive at that time) will exchange their corruptible bodies for resurrection bodies. All of this occurs “in the twinkling of an eye.” Poof!

A clue is provided concerning the timing of these events: it states they will occur “at the last trumpet.” A trumpet blast is also mentioned in the passage from 1 Thessalonians. More about this trumpet will be covered later.

What do these two passages tell us?

1. Christ comes for His bride, but not all the way to Earth. He stops to call us out from “the clouds.”
2. We cannot enter Heaven in our current corruptible bodies but must exchange them for an incorruptible resurrection body.
3. Those “asleep” in their graves, the dead “in Christ,” that is identified with Christ as His own, will be resurrected first.
4. Then those alive in Christ will be called out (*harpazo*) with a commanding shout and a trumpet blast to join the already risen dead in Christ, meeting them and Christ in the clouds.
5. We will all go to Heaven and be with the Lord forever after that.

One last point: This was spoken to Church Age believers and is called a “mystery” for previous dispensations (1 Corinthians 15:51). The event discussed here in 1 Thessalonians and 1 Corinthians is only for Church Age believers, the Bride of Christ. Other believers are resurrected at

different times. For example, OT believers and Tribulation martyrs will be resurrected at the end of the Tribulation (Revelation 20:4).

1 Thessalonians 4:17 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. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.

I love the final statement in verse 18, “Therefore encourage one another with these words.” That is meant to reassure us about the Rapture.

1. The Rapture shouldn't be something we fear; instead, we should be excited about it. Such excitement earns us a crown.

1 Timothy 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also **to all who have loved his appearing.**

2. And more importantly, since the Rapture will happen before the Tribulation, we will not experience that terrible time.

1 Thessalonians 5:9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

That is certainly an encouraging thought when considering the horrors of the Tribulation.

More than one Rapture?

There are several other examples in Scripture of someone being raptured or “snatched away.” We see *harpazo* used in Acts when Philip witnessed to the Ethiopian eunuch and baptized him.

Acts 8:39 And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord **carried Philip away**

“Carried ... away” is *harpazo*. Philip was instantly snatched away (raptured) to “Azotus, and as he passed through, he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea” (v. 40).

And *harpazo* is used in Second Corinthians when Paul speaks of his being “caught up” to the Third Heaven.

2 Corinthians 12:2 I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was **caught up** to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. ³ And I know that this man was **caught up** into paradise—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—

In these passages where *harpazo* is used, it clearly and consistently means to be “snatched away” suddenly, and that is what our subject, the Rapture, is about – being suddenly snatched away.

Enoch is another example. Having found favor with God, Enoch was taken alive and bodily to Heaven.

Genesis 5:24 Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

Hebrews 11:5 Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was commended as having pleased God.

The Hebrews passage tells us he did not experience death. The term “taken up” in the Hebrews passage is *metatithemi*, and it means to transfer or to change.

Elijah is another good example.

2 Kings 2:11 And as they still went on and talked, behold, chariots of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

The term “went up” is the Hebrew word *alah*, which means to ascend or be carried away.

We also might say that the two witnesses during the Tribulation are raptured after they are murdered for their testimony.

Revelation 11:11 But after the three and a half days a breath of life from God entered them, and they stood up on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. ¹² Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, “Come up here!” And they went up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies watched them.

They heard a loud voice calling out, “Come up here!” Looking at 1 Thessalonians 4:16, we see a loud voice used there as well.

1 Thessalonians 4:16 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.

That term “cry of command” is *keleuma*, which means a loud command, such as the one given to sailors on a ship or soldiers in battle. It implies that it is both forceful and loud.

The Case for the Pre-Trib Rapture.

There are four views on the timing of the Rapture. They are:

1. Pre-Tribulation View – It occurs before the beginning of the Tribulation.
2. Mid-Tribulation View – It occurs in the middle of the 7-year Tribulation.
3. Post-Tribulation View – It occurs at the end of the Tribulation just before the Second Coming.
4. Multiple Raptures View – There are multiple raptures during the Tribulation.

Number 1 is the correct position, and here are many reasons why.

Daniel’s Seventieth Week

A key passage about these future events is found in the Old Testament, specifically in Daniel 9:24-27, known as the Seventy Weeks Prophecy. In this prophecy, Daniel receives a vision about “his people,” the Jews in the Babylonian Exile. In the vision, Daniel is given a series of time periods, along with the events associated with each of those times.

Daniel 9:24 “Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place. ²⁵ Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time. ²⁶ And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed. ²⁷ And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.”

“Seventy weeks” can refer to weeks of days or weeks of years—groups of seven years. The only interpretation that makes sense of the prophecy is the latter. If “seventy sevens” is understood as seventy groups of seven years, the prophecy remarkably aligns with actual events.

The seventy weeks are divided into three periods: seven weeks (49 years), sixty-two weeks (434 years), and one week (7 years). Daniel states that from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem (which the Babylonians had destroyed), there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks until the arrival of the Messiah comes. The Hebrew word *mashiyach* means "messiah."

There were three decrees to rebuild Jerusalem, but only one led to work beginning and completion—Artaxerxes' decree in 445 BC. Exactly 49 years later, the Temple was finished and dedicated, and Jerusalem was considered rebuilt. Sixty-two weeks (434 years) afterward, Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey to fulfill the second part of the prophecy!

Daniel says that after the sixty-two weeks, the Messiah will be cut off, and the "prince of the people that shall come will destroy the city and the temple." Jesus was crucified the following week. Forty years later, in AD 70, the Romans under Titus destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple, leaving "not one stone upon another," just as Jesus predicted.

Jerusalem was destroyed forty years after the death of the Messiah. We have a literal seven weeks, a literal sixty-two weeks, but not a literal one week from the death of the Messiah to the destruction of Jerusalem. Other details of Daniel's prophecy are not fulfilled by the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. That event does not meet even the basic details of the prophecy of the seventieth week. If the seventieth week has not occurred yet, then it must be in the future.

We conclude that the current period, known as the Church Age, interrupted the Seventy Weeks before the fulfillment of the seventieth week. This occurred because Israel rejected the King and, consequently, the promised Kingdom, prompting God to call out a people of His own from among the Gentiles.

One key point to understand is that this prophecy pertains to Israel, not the Church. The Church is never mentioned in the Old Testament, and Paul describes it as a *mysterion* (mystery) in his writings. The Church Age is only referenced in the later part of Jesus' ministry, when He discusses the "mystery" (see Romans 11:25; 16:25; 1 Corinthians 15:51; Ephesians 3:1-9). The word *mysterion* means something concealed or secret. It's the same term used for secret rites and rituals of Greek fraternal organizations of that period. The *mysterion* was known only to the initiates, who were told all the secrets at initiation. Daniel was not shown the Church Age in his vision. He only saw the seventy weeks related to "his people," not the inserted Church Age.

All of Daniel 9:27 pertains to that final week we refer to as the Tribulation. So, on the Day of Pentecost after the Cross, the Age of Israel was interrupted, and the Church Age began. God still owes Israel seven years — Daniel's Seventieth Week, which we call the "Tribulation."

- 1) The Second Advent is described as having many signs to watch for, but the Rapture is seen as imminent, and no signs are given as warnings. It will come suddenly. Therefore, the doctrine of the imminence of the Rapture prohibits the Church in any part of the Seventieth Week.
- 2) The "Restrainer" is removed during the Tribulation (2 Thessalonians 2:15-16). Currently, there is some level of restraint on Satan and evil, but we are told that it will be lifted, allowing evil to act without

restraint. The missing Restrainer is the raptured Spirit-indwelt Church with the Holy Spirit, whose influence is gone in the Rapture.

- 3) The need for a gap between the Rapture and the Second Advent – The word *apantésis* (to meet) in Acts 28:15 conveys the idea of meeting and returning with. Some argue that its use in First Thessalonians 4:17 requires an immediate return, but the Greek word does not demand that interpretation. A time interval is necessary between the Rapture and the Second Advent to allow for the judgment seat of Christ (Bema), where Church Age believers will be evaluated, and for the marriage of the Lamb.
- 4) Passages such as 2 Corinthians 5:9; 1 Corinthians 3:11-16, and Revelation 4:4; 19:8, 14 show that the Church has been examined and has received her rewards before the Second Advent.
- 5) Revelation 19:7-9 indicates that the consummation of the union between Christ and the Church occurs before the Second Advent.
- 6) The Tribulation is a “time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jeremiah 30:7), with “Jacob” referring to Israel, because the Church will not be present.
- 7) Distinctions between the Rapture and the Second Advent
 - a. The Rapture involves the removal of all believers, while the Second Advent involves the revealing of the Son.
 - b. The Rapture involves the Saints being caught up in the air, while the Second Advent refers to Christ returning with them in glory.
 - c. In the Rapture, the Groom comes to claim His bride; in the Second Coming, He returns with His Bride.
 - d. The Rapture is the removal of the Church, and the Second Advent is the establishment of the Kingdom.
 - e. The Rapture offers a message of comfort, while the Second Coming brings judgment.
 - f. The Rapture remains a mystery, while the Second Advent is explained in detail in both Testaments.
 - g. The Rapture pertains to the Church, while the Second Advent relates to Israel. The Tribulation continues the Age of Israel, as mentioned in Daniel 9.
 - h. At the Rapture, believers are judged, while at the Second Advent, Jews and Gentile unbelievers are judged.
 - i. The Rapture is only for believers, while the Second Advent is for everyone.

- j. The expectation of the Church at the Rapture is to be taken into the Lord's presence, while the expectation of Israel at the Second Advent is to be taken into the Kingdom.

The Twenty-Four Elders

In Revelation 4:4, we are given a vision of twenty-four elders seated on thrones, dressed in white, crowned with golden crowns, in heaven before God. Sitting on thrones and wearing white symbolize righteousness and royal dignity. The crowns (*stefanos*) are crowns of reward, like the laurel crowns given to athletes, not crowns of rulership. The number 24 symbolizes the priesthood; the Levites had 24 orders, and only the Church is called a Royal Priesthood (1 Peter 2:5, 9). These twenty-four represent the raptured, evaluated, and rewarded Church in Heaven. They are pictured before the Tribulation begins in the following chapters of Revelation.

Guidance Absent in Epistles

If the Church were to go through the Tribulation, the epistles would have provided some guidance on how to handle it. None is given.

The message of the two witnesses

Two witnesses will appear during the Tribulation (Revelation 11:3-14), and their message relates to Israel, as do their clothing, character, and assumed identity.

The Church at Laodicia

Chapters 2 and 3 of Revelation are the letters to the seven churches. Most expositors view these churches as symbols of different periods in church history, with Laodicea representing the final stage of the professing church. The seventh church at Laodicea is depicted as lukewarm. If it is the true church, how could it go through the Tribulation and remain merely lukewarm?

The remnant at the Second Advent

Passages tell us there will be a remnant of believers on Earth at the Second Advent. If believers were raptured at the Second Advent, how could there still be believers remaining?

The object of the Satanic attack during the Tribulation

The only organized church mentioned during the Tribulation is the apostate Jezebel system (Revelation 2:22) and the harlot system (Revelation 17 and 18). There is no mention of the true church as separate from this apostate system. Therefore, if it exists, it must be part of the apostate system and subject to the same judgments. However, it is said that believing witnesses have kept themselves from defilement. Since the true church is not mentioned, it must be concluded that these are believers who come to Christ *after* the start of the Tribulation.

The Church is not appointed to wrath

Revelation 3:10 “I will keep you from the hour of temptation...” The Greek does not say “during” or “through” the hour of temptation, but rather “*from* the hour of temptation.” This is determined by the use of the Greek *ek*, which means out from.

First Thessalonians 5:9 states, “God has not appointed us to wrath....” The passage compares light to darkness, and a comparison to Joel 2:2, Zephaniah 1:14-18, and Amos 5:18 help identify darkness as the Seventieth Week.

The Analogy of a Middle Eastern Wedding

Understanding the process of a first-century arranged marriage helps interpret many passages about the Church, which is described as the Bride of Christ (Ephesians 5:22-33; Revelation 21:2, 9; 22:17). The Bible is a marriage covenant. Both the *Tanach* (Old Testament) and the *Brit Hadashah* (New Testament) show how God, through the Messiah, the Bridegroom, is in the process of marrying His bride, the believers in Him, who will ultimately live and dwell with Him forever. Let’s look at some relevant passages first.

John 14:2 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. ³ 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.

1 Thessalonians 4:16 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. ¹⁷ 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.

Mark 13:32 “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³ Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is.

Matthew 25:6 “And at midnight a cry was *heard*: ‘Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!’

1 Corinthians 15:51 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 incorruptible, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

Revelation 4:1 After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, “Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.” (24 Elders seen in v4.)

1. **The selection of the bride** — The bride was typically chosen by the father of the bridegroom, and similarly, believers in the Messiah are chosen by God (John 15:16).
2. **A bride price was set**—a price had to be paid for the bride. The agreed-upon amount was called a *mohar* in Hebrew. Yeshua paid a very high price for His bride—His life.
3. **The bride and groom are betrothed to each other.** — This is the initial stage of marriage, called *kiddushin* or betrothal. The betrothal legally binds the bride and groom in a marriage contract, although they do not live together physically. Historically, God betrothed Himself to Israel at Mount Sinai (Jeremiah 2:2; Hosea 2:19-20). Whenever you accept the Messiah into your heart, you become betrothed to Him.
4. **A written document called a *ketubah* is created.** — The *ketubah* is the marriage contract that details the bride price, the promises of the groom, and the rights of the bride. The word *ketubah* means "that which is written." The Bible is the believer's *ketubah*.

5. **The bride must give her consent.** — God betrothed Himself to Israel at Mount Sinai, as stated in Jeremiah 2:2. Israel agreed to the marriage proposal from God and said, "I do," as it is written in Exodus 24:3. Likewise, Church Age believers must freely consent to the relationship, as it is written in Romans 10:8-10.
6. **Gifts were given to the bride, and a cup called the cup of the covenant was shared between the bride and the groom.** — The rite of betrothal (*erusin*) is completed when the groom gives something of value to the bride, and she accepts it. The gift God gives to those who accept the Messiah is the Holy Spirit, along with about thirty other gifts, including eternal life, the imputed righteousness of Christ, spiritual gifts, and more. At this time, the cup of the covenant was shared, and marriage was sealed between the bride and the groom with the drinking of wine. This cup, known as the cup of the covenant, is mentioned in Jeremiah 31:31-33. Jesus spoke of the cup of the New Covenant in Luke 22:20.
7. **The bride underwent a *mikvah* (water immersion), a ritual of cleansing.** — *Mikvah* is a ceremonial act of purification by immersion in water and signifies a transition from an old way to a new way. In the context of marriage, it represents leaving an old life behind and starting a new life with your spouse (Genesis 2:23-24; Ephesians 5:31). Immersing in the *mikvah* is regarded as spiritual rebirth. Our water baptism is our *mikvah*.
8. **The bridegroom departed to his father's house to prepare the bridal chamber.** — Before he leaves, he will make a statement to the bride. "I go to prepare a place for you; if I go, I will return again unto you." This is the same statement Jesus made in John 14:1-3 before He ascended to His Father's house in Heaven.
9. **The bride was consecrated and separated for a time while the bridegroom was away building the house.** — Before the bridegroom could retrieve his bride, the groom's father had to be satisfied that the son had completed all preparations. The bridegroom did not know when his father would declare the bridal chamber ready and send him to fetch his bride. This is exactly what Jesus was referring to in Mark 13:32-37, "no man knows the day or the hour." Meanwhile, the bride was to wait eagerly for the return of the bridegroom, who could come at any time, even in the middle of the night. Jesus referred to this in Mark 13:32-37 and Matthew 25:1-13.

10. **The bridegroom would return with a shout, "Behold, the bridegroom comes," and the sound of the ram's horn (*shofar*) would be blown.** — When the bridegroom did come, he came with a shout (Matthew 25:6) and with the blowing of a *shofar* (trumpet) (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelation 4:1). The bridegroom comes to the bride's house **but does not enter and calls (*shouts*) for her to come out**, and the two return to the prepared bridal chamber for the honeymoon.
11. The bride and groom will go to the wedding chamber, or *chadar* in Hebrew, where the marriage will be consummated. They will stay in that wedding chamber for seven days. In Genesis 29, when Jacob finds out he is actually marrying Leah instead of Rachel, he demands an explanation from his father-in-law, Laban. (Genesis 29:26) And Laban said, "It must not be done so in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn. ²⁷ Fulfill her week, and we will give you this one also for the service which you will serve with me still another seven years." ²⁸ Then Jacob did so and fulfilled her week. So he gave him his daughter Rachel as a wife also." At the end of the seven days, the bride and groom will come out of the wedding chamber. This can be seen in Joel 2:16 "Gather the people, Sanctify the congregation, Assemble the elders, Gather the children and nursing babes; Let the bridegroom go out from his chamber, And the bride from her dressing room."
12. **Finally, there would be a marriage supper for all the guests invited by the bride's father.** — The marriage was consummated on the first night (Genesis 29:23). A friend of the bridegroom stood outside the door. All the assembled wedding guests gathered outside, waiting for the bridegroom's friend to announce the consummation of the marriage, which was communicated to him by the groom. John the Baptist referred to this in John 3:29. At this signal, great rejoicing broke out. The bloodstained linen from that night was preserved as proof of the bride's virginity (Deuteronomy 22:13-21). On the wedding day, the bridegroom is portrayed as a king and the bride as a queen. After the marriage, the bride (the Church) and the Bridegroom Christ will return to Earth. The marriage supper will take place on Earth, and only the invited guests of the bridegroom's Father (God the Father) will be present at the banquet (Revelation 19:7-16). The wedding feast is a theme of the Festival of Tabernacles, *Sukkot*.

Conclusion:

The Tribulation is a period when God refocuses on dealing with Israel, as shown by Daniel's Seventy Weeks vision. Israel and the Church are two separate entities in God's plan, and He has two different economies for working with each. Israel is not the Church, and the Church is not Israel, nor does the Church replace Israel. Yes, there are Gentile believers during the Age of Israel and Jewish believers during the Church Age. When Israel rejected the King, she also rejected the promised Kingdom. Both John the Baptist and Jesus said the "Kingdom is at hand." With that rejection, God interrupted the Age of Israel to call out a people of His own from among the Gentiles, who did receive Him. Once that group is complete—and we don't know when—God will come for His Bride and take her to His Father's house for the wedding. Christ and His Bride will be revealed at the Second Advent.