

BOOK OF REVELATION GLOSSARY

The Church

The Church is the body of Christ (Col. 1:24), birthed at Pentecost when the Holy Spirit indwelt those who believed (I Cor. 12:13; Acts 2:41). God has made of Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus one new man (Eph. 2:15). Jewish and Gentile believers are joint heirs in the same body (Eph. 3:6).

The Church, Gentiles and Jews becoming one in the body of Christ (Eph. 3:1-13), was a “mystery” not revealed in the OT (Eph. 3:3-5).

NOTE: There is ONE way of salvation: by grace through faith in God’s revealed message which always points to the Messiah, Jesus. While there is equality at the foot of the cross as far as justification/salvation is concerned (no longer Jews or Gentiles, no longer male or female, no longer bond or free as we read in Gal. 3:28), God has a distinct purpose in His plan of redemption for Israel and a distinct purpose in His plan of redemption for the Church. At this time in God’s plan, He is saving individual Jews and individual Gentiles who come to faith in Jesus, for there is salvation in no other, *for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved* (Acts 4:12).

Great White Throne Judgment

Often called, the “final judgment,” the Great White Throne Judgment follows the millennial reign of Christ. Its purpose is not to determine whether one is saved or not, but rather to pass judgment on the works of the unsaved to demonstrate their unrighteousness and that they fall short of the holiness of God. The sentence is the second death: eternal separation from God in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:11-15).

Imminent

Imminent means approaching, coming, on the way, in the offing, in the pipeline, on the horizon, in the air, just around the corner, coming down the pike...imminent means UPON US! This is a term used in connection with the return of Christ for the Church (the body of Christ; genuine believers permanently indwelt by the Holy Spirit). His coming for the Church as promised in John 14:3 is imminent, without the necessity of any event that must take place before the Lord returns for His Church. His coming for the Church is not qualified by description of any signs or prerequisite events. By contrast, the return of Christ at the end of the Tribulation is preceded by a number of signs (Matt. 24:4-22).

Israel

Re: the term “Israel”: the OT records over 2,000 usages; the NT records 73 usages.

- The use of the term “Israel” in the OT:
 - Gen. 32:28 – first used; God changed Jacob’s name to Israel – “striving/struggling with God.” Jacob was the father of the twelve tribes of Israel.

▪ Israel – physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. NOT just Abraham! The label “son of Abraham” doesn’t qualify one as Jewish. There are those who are physically descended from Abraham who are NOT Jewish, i.e. Ishmael’s descendants. NOTE: Gen. 21:12 and Rom. 9:7 – “In Isaac your seed shall be called” – the promise would come through Isaac and not through Ishmael; it would come through Jacob, as the father of the 12 tribes of Israel, and not Esau [Rom. 9:12])

The word is used throughout the Scriptures to refer to a specific national people group.

Millennium

The word millennium means a thousand years and refers to the promise of Scripture that Christ would reign on earth for a thousand years. The millennium has come to be synonymous for not only Christ’s reign on earth, but for the fulfillment of all Old Testament hopes and expectations associated with the kingdom of God on earth—peace, no war, perfect seasons, Israel and Jerusalem the center of the earth, Gentile domination removed, etc. (key verses, Psa. 2; Isa. 2:1-4; 9:7; Isa. 11:2ff; Eze. 40 through 48; Zech. 14: 3-4, 5b, 8-9; Rev. 20).

Mystery

Mystery, the Greek *musthion*, is not something mysterious (in the modern sense) but something unknown until revealed to the initiate. In Scripture it refers to God’s secrets, His counsels and purposes, which are not known to man apart from His special revelation in Scripture or by His prophets. It is particularly used in the New Testament of truth unknown in the Old Testament, but revealed in New Testament times. Eleven different mystery truths can be distinguished in the New Testament (Matt. 13:11; Rom. 11:1-25; 1 Cor. 15:51-57 [the rapture of the Church]; Eph. 3:1-11 [the Church]; 5:25-32; Col. 1:26-27; 2:2; 1 Thess. 2:7; 1 Tim. 3:16; Rev. 1:20; 10:7; 17:5,7).

Prophecy

As used here, prophecy refers to that part of God’s revelation in Scripture that is predictive, the revelation which God gives from His sovereign and eternal plans and foreknowledge of things to come. The prophet was one who spoke God’s message to His people. In this he was both a forth teller (preaching) and a foreteller (prediction). It is the predictive element we are concerned with here, however, we must always keep in mind that prophecy, though dealing with the future, carries a current message for godliness, peace, and comfort.

Rapture

The word *rapture* does not occur in the Bible. The term comes from a Latin word, “rapturo,” which is simply a translation of the Greek word *harpazo*. The Greek word *harpazo* (found in I Thess. 4:17) means seize by force; *snatch* up, suddenly and decisively – like someone seizing bounty (spoil, a prize); to take by an *open display* of force. The concept of the “carrying off” or the rapture of the Church is clearly taught in the NT.

The rapture of the church is the event in which God “snatches away” all those “in Christ” (I Thess. 4:16) – Jewish and Gentile believers - from the earth in order to make way for

His righteous judgment to be poured out on the rebellious earth during the tribulation period. The rapture is described primarily in 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 and 1 Corinthians 15:50–54 and in John 14:1-3. God will resurrect all believers “in Christ” who have died, give them glorified bodies, and take them from the earth, along with all living believers, who will also be given glorified bodies at that time. *For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever* (1 Thessalonians 4:16–17).

The rapture will involve an instantaneous transformation of our bodies to fit us for eternity. *We know that when he [Christ] appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is* (1 John 3:2). The rapture is to be distinguished from the second coming. At the rapture, the Lord comes “in the clouds” to meet us “in the air” (1 Thessalonians 4:17). At the second coming, the Lord descends all the way to the earth to stand on the Mount of Olives, resulting in a great earthquake followed by a defeat of God’s enemies (Zechariah 14:3–4).

Revelation, Book of – The book of Revelation (or the Apocalypse) is the unveiling of Jesus Christ, in His glory! Revelation reveals the culmination of God’s plan for the world. Revelation foretells the end of the present heavens and earth and the beginning of the new heavens and the new earth.

The Tribulation - a specific eschatological time of intense trouble (Dan. 12:1) the duration of which will be seven years based on Dan. 9:27. The Tribulation will be a time of judgment from God that will come upon the entire world (Rev. 6 through 19; Matt. 24:21, 29), will be unprecedented in its affliction, and will be culminated by the personal return of Jesus Christ to earth (Rev. 19). It is a time of God’s wrath or indignation and the vindication of God’s holiness (Zeph. 1:15, 18; Rev. 6:17; 1 Thess. 1:10; Rev. 14:7, 10; 19:2). God’s wrath against man’s sin and rebellion will be withheld no longer. The Tribulation will begin with the signing of a peace treaty with Israel by the antichrist, the man of sin, the beast of Revelation 13 (Dan. 9:26-27).

NOTE: during the Tribulation there will be unparalleled judgment and unparalleled evangelism!

The Purposes of the Tribulation

To purge Israel and to prepare her for the Messiah, for restoration, and for the Millennial/Messianic Kingdom (Matt. 23:37-39; Eze. 20:33-38; Zech. 12:10ff; Jer. 30:1-17; Mal. 3:3). The Tribulation is also designed to break the yoke of Gentile bondage (Jer. 30:8, 11; 31:11).

The Tribulation is an open judgment: God pouring out His wrath against all mankind for rebellion against God (Zeph. 1:15, 17, 18; Joel 3:12-14; Rev. 6:16-17).

The Tribulation will reveal the true character and program of Satan. The Tribulation will permit Satan’s program to come to its logical conclusion resulting in judgment from God. It will demonstrate that Satan is the cause of war, murder, and deception, and that he deserves judgment from God which God will administer (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 12:7-12; 20:1-3; Isa. 14:12-17; Eze. 28:12-19).

The Tribulation will demonstrate that God is holy, righteous, just, and still on the throne...that He has not ignored man's rebellion or sin, but that He has held back only in mercy and longsuffering, not willing that any should perish (2 Pet. 3:9).