

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW OF MATTHEW 24

(24:1–2) When Jesus' disciples pointed out the Temple, Jesus said that not one stone shall be left upon another

(24:3) The disciples asked:

1. When will these things be? Only Father will know time of Rapture
2. What will be the sign of Your *parousia*? Christ Himself (in the sky) will be the sign
3. What will be the sign of the end of the age? “

QUESTION 1:

(24:36) No one (apart from the Father) knows when the *parousia* will be
(cf. Mark 13:32)

(24:37–39) When the *parousia* starts (in the Rapture), all unbelievers will be caught off-guard and will be unprepared for the following calamity, just as they were in Noah's day

(24:40–41) When the *parousia* starts (in the Rapture), neither the man taken nor the man left nor the woman taken nor the woman left will know beforehand that it would happen

(24:43–51) Jesus warns His disciples that they will not know when He will come to rapture them, so they need to be rewardable at all times (because the Rapture will be at an unexpected time)

QUESTIONS 2–3

(24:4–14) Then (after the Rapture and a gap) the world enters the beginning of labor pains (the first half of the Tribulation)

(24:15–31) Then the world will enter the Great Tribulation (the second half of the Trib) and Christ will return (Second Advent)

(24:15–28) The world will enter the Great Tribulation

(24:29) As the time of Tribulation draws to a close, the sun will be darkened, the moon will not give light, stars will fall, and the heavens will be shaken

(24:30–31) The Son of Man will appear in the heavens (in the clouds, per 1 Thess 4:17) as a sign to all people and earth will mourn and will see Him come on the clouds of heaven He will gather together His elect from the ends of the heavens (e.g., the clouds, as 1 Thess 4:17 says)

REVIEW OF DANIEL 9

(9:1–2) In 539 BC Daniel recognizes from Jeremiah 25:11–12 that the captivity in Babylon was nearing the 70 years prophesied by Jeremiah

(9:3–19) In light of Jeremiah 25 Daniel confessed Israel's national sin in the desire that God would end the captivity and return the people to Jerusalem

(9:20–23) The angel Gabriel came to inform Daniel (that the end of the 70 year captivity would be followed by another 490 years in which God would prepare Judah for the Kingdom)

(9:24) 490 Years of dealing w/ Judah & Jerusalem will be necessary to prepare for the Kingdom

The word translated week literally means 7 or *heptad*. Our only heptad is a heptad of days, but in this passage it is heptads of years. In other words, there are seventy heptads of years (490 years)

We saw that prophetic years are 360 days (If you need details, listen to last week's message)

(9:25) Starting with the March 5, 444 BC decree to rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince (makes triumphal entry: March 30, AD 33) will be 69 (7 + 62) heptads

Nehemiah 2:1–8 speaks of this decree

Nehemiah 2:1 dates it as Artaxerxes' twentieth year = 444 BC

490 (360-day) years = 173,880 days which is 476 (365¹/₄-day) years + 25 days

476 years + 25 days after March 5, 444 BC = March 30, AD 33 (Christ's triumphal entry)

(9:26) After March 30, AD 33, Messiah would be killed (He was crucified on April 3, AD 33); then the (Roman) people of the coming prince (the beast) would come as a flood and destroy Jerusalem and the Temple (which happened in AD 70)

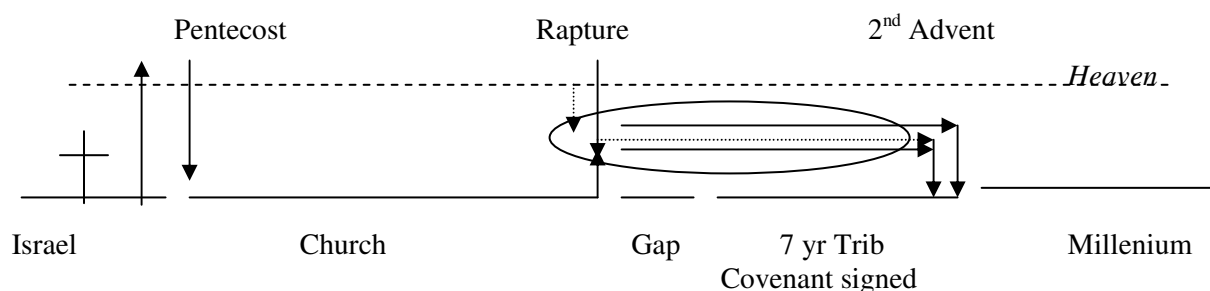
Notice that Messiah is not killed during the seventieth heptad, but after the sixty-ninth

It is like the person who started college in 2001. He takes three years off, so he resumes college in 2005. We would say that 2005 was his second year of college, not his fifth year of college.

Likewise, there is a long gap between the sixty-ninth heptad of God working with Judah and the seventieth heptad of God working with Judah

(9:27) The 70th heptad (still future) will start w/ a covenant that will be broken at the 3½ year point, at which time Jews will not be allowed to sacrifice & the abomination of one who desolates (will despoil the Temple) as the first of many desolations; then the beast will be destroyed

This covenant will mark the beginning of the seven-year Tribulation. This passage is how we know the length of the Tribulation. This occurs some time after the Rapture. The church is now with the Lord in the clouds.



The verse reads Then **he** shall confirm a covenant. . . .

This assumes that the subject = **the prince** *who is to come* (the beast)

Another grammatical possibility is that the subject should not be *he*.

The subject could be *it* = **the people** *of the prince who is to come*.

I prefer the second, but will not expound on that at this time.

Cf. Matthew 24:15

Review of 1 Thessalonians 1:9–10: The thematic statement for 1 Thessalonians

Christ will deliver the Church from coming wrath (Daniel's 70th week)

Review of 1 Thessalonians 5:9–11

The church is not appointed for wrath but for deliverance through Jesus Christ

NEW EXPOSITION

Revelation 5 continues the chapter 4's scene of the heavenly court. Despite the heavenly setting, the passage starts with a scene of despair (vv 1-4). Revelation 5:1 mentions an unusual scroll, an opisthograph (a scroll written on both sides). John perceives the futility of the search for someone worthy to take and to break its seals. He weeps, until learning that Jesus is worthy.

At the point that John takes heart at Christ being found worthy, a huge heavenly choir convenes and sings a new song to Jesus Christ: the One who is worthy. Despair suddenly is transformed into universal exaltation.

(For more detailed treatment of this passage, see www.mol316.com message on Revelation 5)

1. This passage gives some important clues regarding the timing of the Rapture in relation to other important eschatological events.

The Groups Comprising the Choir

There are four groups: All of them sing verse 13b, but only selected groups sing musical selections prior to verse 13 (verses 9b, 10, and 12b).

1. The four living creatures (cherubs?). Revelation 5:8–12 mentions them.
2. The twenty-four elders. Cf. 5:8–12.
3. Many angels. Cf. 5:11–12.
4. Every creature everywhere. Mentioned only in verse 13.

The Antiphonal (*Give-and-Take*) Arrangement

Not all musical arrangements involve everyone singing exactly the same words as every other singer. A common antiphonal arrangement involves men singing one part with the women singing a response.

The Song of Moses in Exodus 15 had such an antiphonal arrangement.

Likewise, Psalm 136 is antiphonal

Revelation 5 also has an antiphonal arrangement. Within verses 9–10 three textual variants relate to the issue. Before we consider that, let us resolve three textual variants. Your text for verses 9–10 should read:

⁹ *And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us^A to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, ¹⁰ And have made them^B kings and priests to our God; And they^C shall reign on the earth."*

1. The four living creatures and/or the twenty-four elders (5:9b)

You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,

2. The four living creatures and/or the twenty-four elders (5:10)

And You have made them kings and priests to our God; And they shall reign on the earth.

3. Tens of thousands of angels, the four living creatures, and the elders (Verse 12b)

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!

4. Every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them [including angels, the living creatures, and the elders] (5:13b)

Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!

5. The four living creatures (Verse 14b):

Amen!

6. The twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped (5:14c)

[Unspecified words of worship, very likely involving singing by the elders]

Observe how the choir grows and shrinks:

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|-----------------------------------------------|-------|--------|
| 1. Less than twenty-nine singers in verse 9b, | small | |
| 2. Less than twenty-nine singers in verse 10, | small | |
| 3. Tens of thousands of singers in verse 12b, | | large |
| 4. All of creation in verse 13b. | | larger |
| 5. Four singers in verse 14b. | small | |
| 6. Twenty-four worshippers in verse 14c. | small | |

Not all of the singers sing every word of the song. Furthermore, John did not quote what the twenty-four elders said [sang?] as they worshipped in verse 14c. The fact that the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders begin and close the worship is a manifest demonstration that an overall antiphonal arrangement is at work here. Now, the question is whether an antiphonal interchange of singers occurs between verses 9b and 10.

Observations:

Those who sing v 9 are human, because they sing *You have redeemed us by Your blood.*

The 24 elders are human. They have been redeemed and they will be kings.

The ones who sing verse 10 sing about humans, because they sing *You have made them kings and priests to our God and they will reign upon the earth.*

The four living creatures are angelic

The judgment seat of Christ happened prior to Revelation 5:9–10

The Rapture happened prior to the judgment seat of Christ

The seven seals are opened after Revelation 5:9–10

Widespread agreement exists that the seals occur very early in the seven years

CONCLUSION

Daniel 9 tells us that the 70th heptad is a time for God to work with Judah (and Israel)

Revelation 5:9–10 puts the judgment seat of Christ before the 7 seals—a time of God's wrath. The rapture occurs prior to the judgment seat of Christ.

Matthew 24 differentiates the rapture from the second advent, by showing the rapture to be secret until it happens, while the second advent happens at the end of the (7 year) Tribulation. The easiest way for the rapture to be totally secret (at a time of peace) is for it to precede the beginning of birth pangs

1 Thessalonians 1:9 and 5:9 say that Christ will deliver the church in the Rapture, because it is not destined for wrath