

The Rapture vs. The Day of the Lord

There are some rather stark differences between the ‘catching away’, what has come to be known as the Rapture, and the climatic event known as the Day of the Lord. Following is a brief listing of some of these major differences.

<u>Rapture</u>	<u>Day of the Lord</u>
All about Resurrection for Believers <i>1Thess.4:16-17</i>	All about judgment for unbelievers <i>Isa.13:6-16</i>
Believers are taken from earth to heaven <i>Jn.14:1-3; 1Thess.4:16-17</i>	Believers return from heaven to earth <i>Rev.19:11-16</i>
Unbelievers are left on earth -> Tribulation <i>1Thess.4:16-17</i>	Unbelievers are removed from earth <i>Rev.19:17-21; Mt.24:37-41</i>
Instantaneous, unannounced event <i>1Cor.15:50-52</i>	Clearly announced. Every eye will see Him <i>Rev.1:7</i>
Believer’s comfort/blessed hope <i>Titus 2:13; 1Thess.4:18, 5:9-11</i>	Unbelievers worst nightmare <i>Rev.6:12-17</i>
Believers are kept from the Tribulation <i>Rev.3:10; 1Thess.5:9-11</i>	Unbelievers face extreme wrath <i>Rev.8:1-13; Mt.24:15-22</i>
Focus is on Church, Jew/Gentile, in Christ <i>1Thess.4:13-18</i>	Focus is on Israel. No Church mentioned... <i>1Thess.5:1-7; Rev.1-3 vs. 4-19; Rev.12:7-17</i>

We believe these two events bracket the time known as the Tribulation. The Tribulation is a totally unprecedented time of God’s judgment on the sinful world system and sinners specifically. Soon after the Rapture the Antichrist will make a 7 year covenant (treaty) with the nation of Israel. God begins to pour out His wrath as seen in the opening of the 7 seals in the book of the Revelation. At the mid-point of the 7 year treaty (3.5 years), the restraint on the Antichrist will be removed (IIThess.2:5-12) and the next 3.5 years will be absolutely horrible. This last 3.5 years is known as the Great Tribulation. God’s wrath is increasing (Rev.8), Satan’s desperation is increasing (Rev.12:12), and the result is world-wide destruction. Finally, the bodily return of Christ (the Day of the Lord, Rev.19) ends this time. Satan is bound (Rev.20:1-3), all remaining unbelievers are removed from the earth (Mt.25:31-46), and the Lord Jesus Christ sets up His Millennial Kingdom (Mt.25:31).

The Rapture has no prophetic ‘warnings’, but the command to believers is to watch and be ready. For believers, this is our blessed hope (Titus 2:13). For unbelievers, it’s the beginning of the end (Rev.8:13). Knowing these two truths should be our greatest motivation for righteous living and prayerful evangelism.