

some time during or prior to the Great Tribulation period? These questions introduce the basic positions on the relationship of the Rapture to the Tribulation.

B. Eight Basic Views of the Relationship of the Rapture to the Tribulation

All of these views are sketched in a Premillennial framework, although some of them also apply to Amillennial or Postmillennial frameworks as well (minus, of course, the Millennial component).

1. The Posttribulational view

This view holds that after the Tribulation and prior to the Millennium Christ will come again. He will descend from heaven, the saints who have died trusting in Him will be resurrected, the saints who are still alive will be transformed (I Cor. 15:51-53), the two companies of saints will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and the Lord will immediately return with the glorified saints to the earth. The Rapture and the Return (or Revelation) will be one event, with two aspects. Just as in the days of the Roman Empire the people went out of the gates of their city to acclaim a returning victorious general and immediately returned with him to the city to accord him honors, so the saints will be caught up to meet the returning victorious Lord and immediately return with Him to the earth.

2. The Midtribulational View

This view holds that in the middle of the Tribulation Christ will descend from heaven, the saints will be caught up to meet Him in the air, and He together with them will return to heaven for a period of time. Then after the Tribulation and prior to the Millennium Christ will return in power and glory with His glorified saints to the earth. The Rapture and the Return (or Revelation) will be two events, or two phases of the Second Coming. In this view there is a time interval between the first and second phases of the Second Coming.

3. The Pretribulational, Mid-Seventieth Week view

This view holds that the Tribulation occupies the second half of Daniels seventieth "week". Prior to the Tribulation in the middle of the seventieth "week" Christ will descend from heaven, the saints will be caught up to meet Him in the air, and He together with them will return to heaven for the duration of the Tribulation period. Then after the Tribulation at the end of the seventieth "week" and prior to the Millennium Christ will return in power and glory with His glorified saints to the earth. The Rapture and the Return (or Revelation) will be two events or two phases of Christ's Second Advent. In this view there is a time interval between the first and second phases of the Second Coming.