

Looking for the Blessed Hope

One of the things that I have struggled with to understand with clarity (for perhaps a couple of decades or more) as a follower of Christ is the eschatological timeline.

Eschatology or the study of end time events is not clear to many believers.

What happens when we don't understand things?

- Well in general, our emotions become effected.
- We feel a lack of confidence and insecurity.

God doesn't want us to feel unsure or insecure about the future.

Titus 2:13 (NKJV) ¹³ **looking for the blessed hope** and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

How can a blessed hope be a blessed hope if we are unsure and don't understand future things?

How can a blessed hope be a blessed hope when the thought of future things in regards to the coming of Christ scares us?

The Hamas attack on Israel has triggered global fear and a global reaction.

Hundreds of thousands of people worldwide are taking part in pro-Palestinian protests and fear is spreading like wildfire.

People are afraid that the middle east conflict will become World War 3.

Is this the Gog and Magog war described in the book of Ezekiel is a question that's all over the internet?

My hope and prayer for tonight is that the following timeline that I will be showing in regards to the Eschatological timeline will bring greater clarity and assurance to our understanding and hearts.

I want all of us to be confident in the blessed hope and if we are already, we can help others overcome any fears that our future is not secure.

We have to keep in mind that the kingdoms of this world are governed by sinful man controlled by Satan.

There is nothing securing about this fact.

Our hope is not in this world or the kingdoms of this world but we wait for a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God!

Hebrews 11:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ for he (we) waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God.

CHRIST WILL ESTABLISH HIS REIGN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Isaiah 32:17-18 (NKJV) ¹⁷ The work of righteousness will be peace, And the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever.

¹⁸ My people will dwell in a peaceful habitation, In secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places,

This is where we are headed. What a glorious future awaits us and to infuse the blessed hope in our heart God has given us details (prophesies) not to scare us but to assure us.

The only **date** that we have in recent years of prophetic proportions is May 14th 1948.

On May 14, 1948, David Ben-Gurion, the head of the Jewish Agency, proclaimed the establishment of the State of Israel. U.S.

President Harry S. Truman recognized the new nation on the same day.



SLIDE 1

Ezekiel 37:21-28 (NLT2)

²¹ And give them this message from the Sovereign LORD: **I will gather the people of Israel from among the nations. I will bring them home to their own land from the places where they have been scattered.**



An influential event that brought the scattered Jews back to Palestine was the liberation of Jewish prisoners from Auschwitz, Dachau, and other Nazi concentration camps. When Germany collapsed at the end of World War II, the liberation of these Jewish prisoners caused worldwide shock at the grossly inhumane treatment inflicted by the Nazis. This generated sympathy that drew Jewish wealth from around the world and enabled the relocation of more than a million displaced Jews to Palestine.

The Israel Return to the Homeland

On May 14th 1948, the United Nations officially recognized the State of Israel, with US president Harry Truman determining the deciding vote. The Israeli government established the State of

Israel, thus fulfilling the twenty-five-hundred-year-old prophecy recorded in the Bible. Great Britain ended its mandate in Palestine and removed its troops, leaving more than 650,000 Jews to govern themselves in their own land.

In 2006, for the first time in nineteen hundred years, Israel became home to the largest Jewish community in the world, surpassing the Jewish population in the United States. From the 650,000 who returned when the Jewish state was founded in 1948, the population of Israel has swelled to approximately 5.4 million, and it is expected to grow. The significance of Israel's reemergence in her ancient homeland is that this had to occur in order to set the stage for the final fulfillment of biblical prophecies.

To comprehend what an incredible act of God it is to preserve the beleaguered Jews throughout history and then return them to their land, consider this observation by Gary Frazier: "You cannot find the ancient neighbors of the Jews anywhere. Have you ever met a Moabite? Do you know any Hittites? Are there any tours to visit the Ammonites? Can you find the postal code of a single Edomite? No! These ancient peoples disappeared from history and from the face of the earth. Yet the Jews, just as God promised, returned to their land." <https://www.ifcj.org/news/fellowship-blog/the-miracle-of-the-jewish-peoples-return-to-israel>

The next thing that Ezekiel mentions in chapter 37 is the kingdom age. This is yet to come.

Now we know from Revelation 20:1-4 that the kingdom age will be 1000 years.

Ezekiel 37:22-28 (NLT2)

²² I will unify them into one nation on the mountains of Israel. **One king will rule them all; no longer will they be divided into two**

nations or into two kingdoms.

²³ They will never again pollute themselves with their idols and vile images and rebellion, for I will save them from their sinful backsliding. I will cleanse them. Then they will truly be my people, and I will be their God.

²⁴ “My servant David will be their king, and they will have only one shepherd. They will obey my regulations and be careful to keep my decrees.

²⁵ They will live in the land I gave my servant Jacob, the land where their ancestors lived. They and their children and their grandchildren after them will live there forever, generation after generation. And my servant David will be their prince forever.

²⁶ And I will make a covenant of peace with them, an everlasting covenant. I will give them their land and increase their numbers, and I will put my Temple among them forever.

²⁷ I will make my home among them. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

²⁸ And when my Temple is among them forever, the nations will know that I am the LORD, who makes Israel holy.”

Between verses 21 & 22 there are several things that must take place.

1. The rapture
2. The Gog and Magog Invasion Ezekiel chapters 38 & 39.
3. Tribulation
4. Millennial Kingdom

The Gog and Magog Invasion



SLIDE 2

Modern Equivalent to ancient names

- **Magog** = Russia
- **Meshech and Tubal and Togarmah** = modern Turkey.
- **Persia** = Iran.
- **Ethiopia** = modern country of Sudan
- **Libya** Occupying land to the west of Egypt, Libya is the only nation on Ezekiel's list that retains its ancient name today.
- **Gomer** = modern Germany

When will this invasion take place? There is not enough information in the scriptures to say with any certainty.

Ezekiel does say that this invasion will take place in the time of the end.

Ezekiel 38:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ You will come up against My people Israel like a cloud, to cover the land. It will be **in the latter days** that I will

bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me, when I am hallowed in you, O Gog, before their eyes."

<https://joelrosenberg.com>

Will the War of Gog and Magog happen before or after the Rapture?

The truth is we simply do not know the answer for certain, because Ezekiel does not say. Many of the theologians I have cited in this book believe the war will occur after the Rapture.

In the novel *Left Behind*, Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins describe the War of Gog and Magog as having already happened before the Rapture takes place. **In *The Ezekiel Option***, I also chose to portray the war occurring before the Rapture.

But let me be clear: I believe that the Rapture could occur at any moment, and I would certainly not be surprised in any way if it occurred before the events of Ezekiel 38 and 39 come to pass.

Christian theologians speak of the "doctrine of imminence." This means that according to the Bible there is no prophetic event that has to happen before Jesus snatches his church from the earth. That is, the Bible teaches us that we should be ready for Jesus to come for us at any moment. I fully believe that. But it should be noted with regard to this doctrine that while no major prophetic event has to happen before the Rapture, that doesn't mean no such event will happen first. Perhaps the clearest evidence of this truth is the rebirth of Israel. This major prophetic event was foretold in Ezekiel 36–37, yet its fulfillment happened before the Rapture. Thus, it is certainly possible that other events—such as the events of Ezekiel 38–39—could happen before the Rapture as well.

What about the rapture is this even biblical?

Well, you won't find the word itself in the bible. Neither will you find the word trinity. **But yes, the doctrine is biblical.**

The Greek word, from this term "rapture" is derived appears in [1 Thessalonians 4:17](#), translated "caught up." The Latin translation of this verse used the word rapturo. The Greek word it translates is harpazo, which means to snatch or take away. Elsewhere it is used to describe how the Spirit caught up Philip near Gaza and brought him to Caesarea ([Acts 8:39](#)) and to describe Paul's experience of being caught up into the third heaven ([2 Cor. 12:2-4](#)). Thus there can be no doubt that the word is used in [1](#)

[Thessalonians 4:17](https://bible.org/question/where-did-term-8216rapture%E2%80%99-come) to indicate the actual removal of people from earth to heaven. <https://bible.org/question/where-did-term-8216rapture%E2%80%99-come>

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (NKJV)

¹³ But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.

¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.

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.

¹⁸ **Therefore comfort one another with these words.**

[Irenaeus](#) (130 A.D. – 202 AD) was a Bishop of The Church in Lyons, France.

He (Irenaeus) was an Eyewitness to The Apostle John (who wrote The Book of Revelation) and a Disciple of Polycarp (The Apostle John's Disciples).

Irenaeus is Most-Known for His Five-Volume Treatise, “[Against Heresies](#)” in which He EXPOSED The False Religions and Cults of His Day along with Advice for How to Share The Gospel with Those (Unbelievers) were a part of The False Religions and Cults).

On The Subject of The Being Caught Up Together, in “[Against Heresies](#)” [Book 5 Chapter 29](#), Irenaeus wrote: “...when in the end the Church shall be suddenly caught up from this, it is said, "There shall be tribulation such as has not been since the beginning, neither shall be."

6000 YEARS OF APOSTASY

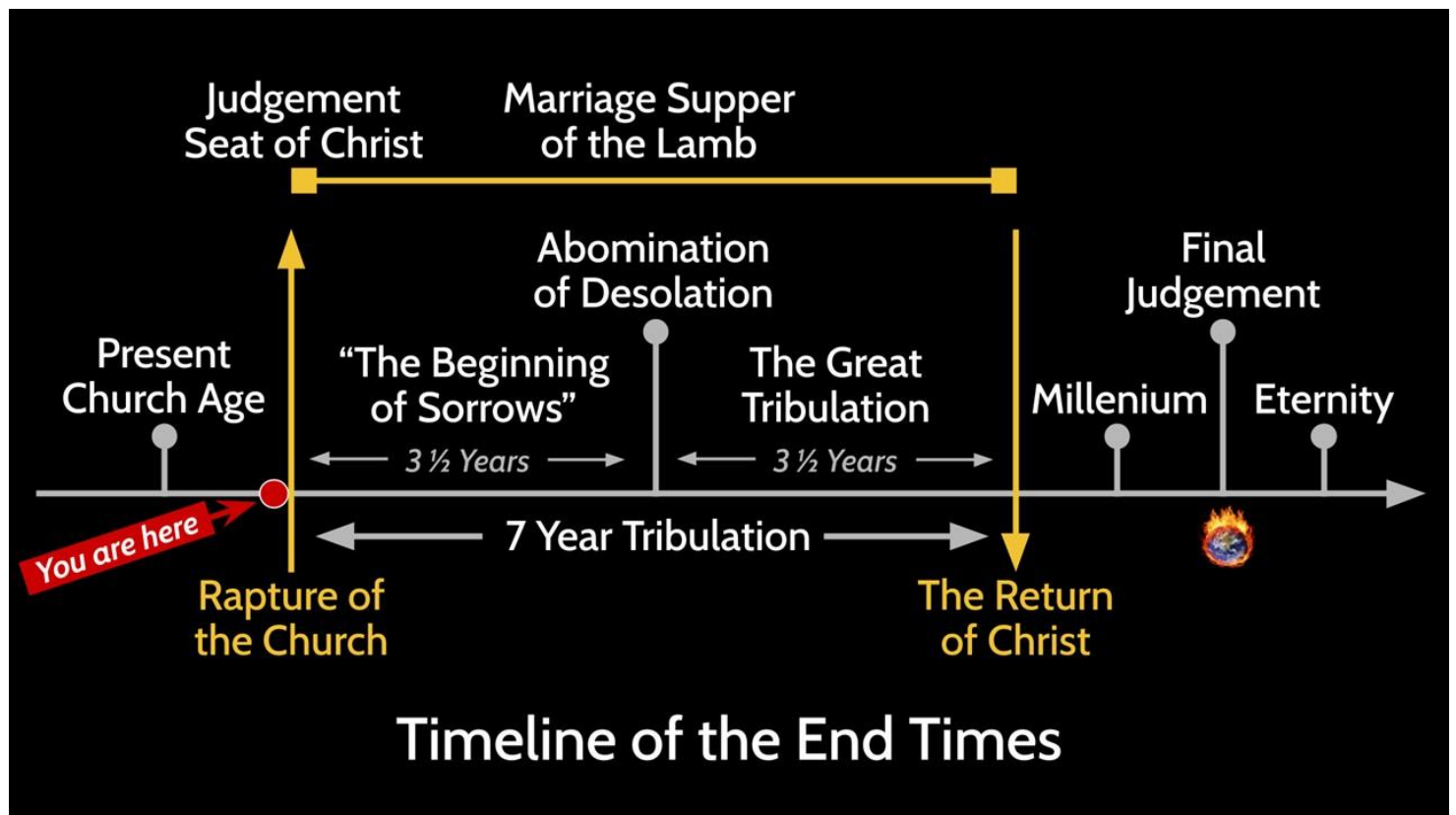
Irenaeus also wrote...Thus, then, the six hundred years of Noah, in whose time the deluge occurred because of the apostasy, and the number of the cubits of the image for which these just men were sent into the fiery furnace, do indicate the number of the name of that man in whom is concentrated the whole apostasy of six thousand years, and unrighteousness, and wickedness, and false prophecy, and deception; for which things' sake a cataclysm of fire shall also come [upon the earth].

**Irenaeus held to the old Jewish tradition that the first six days of creation week were typical of the first six thousand years of human history, with Antichrist manifesting himself in the sixth period. And he expected the millennial kingdom to begin with the second coming of Christ to destroy the wicked and inaugurate, for the righteous, the reign of the kingdom of God during the seventh thousand years, the millennial Sabbath, as signified by the Sabbath of creation week. See: [Against Heresies \(Book V, Chapter 30\)](#)
<https://christianity.stackexchange.com/questions/84736/quotations-from-the-early-church-fathers-who-support-the-jewish-year-6000-as-sig>**

The book of revelation puts the catching up or rapture before the tribulation. Which makes sense because according to Paul the church is not appointed to the wrath of God; which that is what the tribulation is all about.

1 Thessalonians 5:9 (NKJV) ⁹ For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

SLIDE 3



We as followers of Christ shouldn't be afraid of world events.

What should we do?

1 Thes 5