

Unknown or Known Day?, Rapture Imminent or not?, The Last Trumpet Question?

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The above are among the most problematic questions related to the time of the Rapture for the believing Church with regard to the seven year Tribulation period and the return of Messiah – the Creator come in the flesh, even our Lord and only savior Jesus the Christ. We trust the following will clear them up for you. Remember, God gave man the Scriptures to *reveal* – not to conceal!

There are “Unknown Day” Scriptures that teach you can’t know when Jesus will return, such as “watch” – you don’t know when your Lord will come (Mat. 24:36, 42, 44; Mk. 13:32). Therefore, the Rapture is **imminent**. There are no unfulfilled prophecies preventing the *Rapture*, thus He could call us up to meet Him in the air at any moment. Still, many in Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Matthew, and Revelation (to name but a few) must take place before he returns at the end of the Tribulation to establish His thousand year reign on the Throne of David. Indeed, some of these have “signs” and numbers, so there is also a “Known Day” for Christ Jesus’ second coming.

Called “the Day of the Lord,” this “Known Day” is 7 years from Antichrist’s signing a treaty with Israel in which he covenants to protect her and allows the Jews rebuild the Temple (Dan. 9:27; 2 Thes. 2:3-4). He breaks this covenant at the 3½ year midpoint, seizes the Temple, stops the sacrifices, has an image made of himself, and causes the world to worship both it and him (the “abomination of desolation,” Rev. 13:14-15; 2 Thes. 2:4; Mat. 24:15). As Christ returns 1,260 days (= 42 months or 3½ years) afterwards, this day can be “known” (Rev. 12:6 & 14, 13:5).

So which is it, can we know when Jesus will return or not? How can it be imminent if there are signs yet unfulfilled? The paradox is solved by acknowledging that we are looking at two different events. Hence, we simply insert the 7 year Tribulation period *between* the “Unknown” and “Known” days. Those that become born again in the Tribulation will be able to use the above verses, perform a simple calculation and know the day. Pre-Tribulation saints cannot! (Mat. 24:36)

Now the Feast of Trumpets is on the 1st day of Tishri (Jewish month 7, Lev 23:27: September or October). Most associate its fulfillment with Christ’s return & that it is connected with the 7th angel’s trumpet in Revelation 11:14-15 (= 16:16-21). However, the OT Feast of Trumpets Scriptures have no connection whatever with the Rapture. How can the Rapture be **imminent** if it can only transpire on that day of the year? It cannot! Yet Trumpets **does** relate to the 2nd coming!

How so? Trumpets signaled that the final harvest time of the year was almost over (due to winter and its rains). Hence, the 7th angel’s trumpet, which **releases God’s last judgments** (the 7 vials of wrath, Rev. chapt. 16), is the fulfillment of the Feast of Trumpets – harvest time was nearly over for mankind as well. Again, this 7th trumpet has *nothing* to do with the Rapture.

But the context of the “last trumpet” of 1 Corinthians 15:52 does deal with the Rapture. It is the same as the 1 Thes. 4:16 “trumpet of God.” Their **purpose** is to **raise the dead** and initiate the **Rapture**. The “last trumpet” is *not* the 7th angel’s trumpet (Rev. 11:15 = the 3rd woe, cp. vs.14 and 15:1 & 6, also chapt. 16). How do we know this? Because the **purpose** of the 7th angel’s trumpet is to release the immense 7 vial judgments upon the earth very near *the end* of the 7 year Tribulation. They are *not* the same event – their **purposes** are completely *different*!

Furthermore, God says that we are not intended for the **wrath** of the day of the Lord (1 Thes. 5:2, 4, 9; cp. 1:10). So Christians do not go through the Great Tribulation Judgments – the “last trumpet” is blown **before** they begin. Therefore, the “last trumpet” of 1 Cor. 15:52 and the 7th angel’s trumpet in Rev. 11:15 are **separated** by about 7 years!

Indeed, Matthew 24:31 has a trumpet blown after the “last trumpet” of 1 Corinthians 15:52 as well as after the Great Tribulation. Thus, the Corinthian “last trumpet” is only “last” in that it is the last trumpet blown *before* the seven year Tribulation judgments begin - with a man! (Rev. 6:2)