

# The Difference Between the Rapture of the Church and the Second Coming of Christ

by Lewis S. Chafer<sup>1</sup>

Chafer has given us thirteen differences between the rapture and the second coming of Christ. The two events are not the same—they are distinct from each other—though there are some who think they describe the same happening.

1. In the rapture Christ comes to take His own to heaven. In the second coming He returns to the earth to reign!
2. At the rapture, living saints are translated. No saints are translated in the second coming.
3. At the rapture the saints go to heaven. At the second coming saints remain on the earth.
4. At the rapture the world is unchanged and unjudged and continues on in sin, while at the second coming the world is judged.
5. The rapture of the church is a deliverance from the day of wrath, while the second coming IS the day of wrath.
6. The rapture is always described as imminent, while other events take place before the second coming of Christ.
7. The rapture is a truth revealed only in the New Testament while the second coming is revealed many times in the Old Testament.
8. The rapture relates only to those who are saved while the second coming has to do with the saved and the unsaved.

---

<sup>1</sup>As cited by Mal Couch, in his book *The Hope of Heaven*, pages 37-39

9. At the rapture Satan is not bound; at the second coming he is bound!
10. As presented in the New Testament no unfulfilled prophecy is given as standing between the church and the time of its rapture.
11. Concerning the resurrection of saints in relation to Christ coming to set up His kingdom in both the Old and New Testaments, no mention is ever made of the translation of living saints, the church, at the same time. The rapture ends the church age and it is not mentioned in the Old Testament. It takes place in order to get the church, the true believers, out of the world just before the coming of the seven year tribulation, the wrath of God! And after the seven year tribulation, Christ comes to establish His millennial reign, the one thousand year kingdom period!
12. In the second coming event there is no adequate place for an event like the rapture.
13. The second coming has to do with Israel and not the church.

**THUS ...**

As presented in the New Testament, the rapture is a comforting hope (John 14:1-3; 1 Thess. 4:18), a purifying hope (1 John 3:1-3), and a blessed or happy expectation (Titus 2:13). While the world will not see Christ until His second coming to set up His kingdom, Christians will see Christ in His glory at the time of the rapture, at "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13).  
--Lewis S. Chafer

The Middletown Bible Church

349 East Street  
Middletown, CT 06457  
(860) 346-0907

*A Complete Literature List is Available Upon Request*  
[www.middletownbiblechurch.org](http://www.middletownbiblechurch.org)